Jan. 27, 1986

THE NEW YORKER

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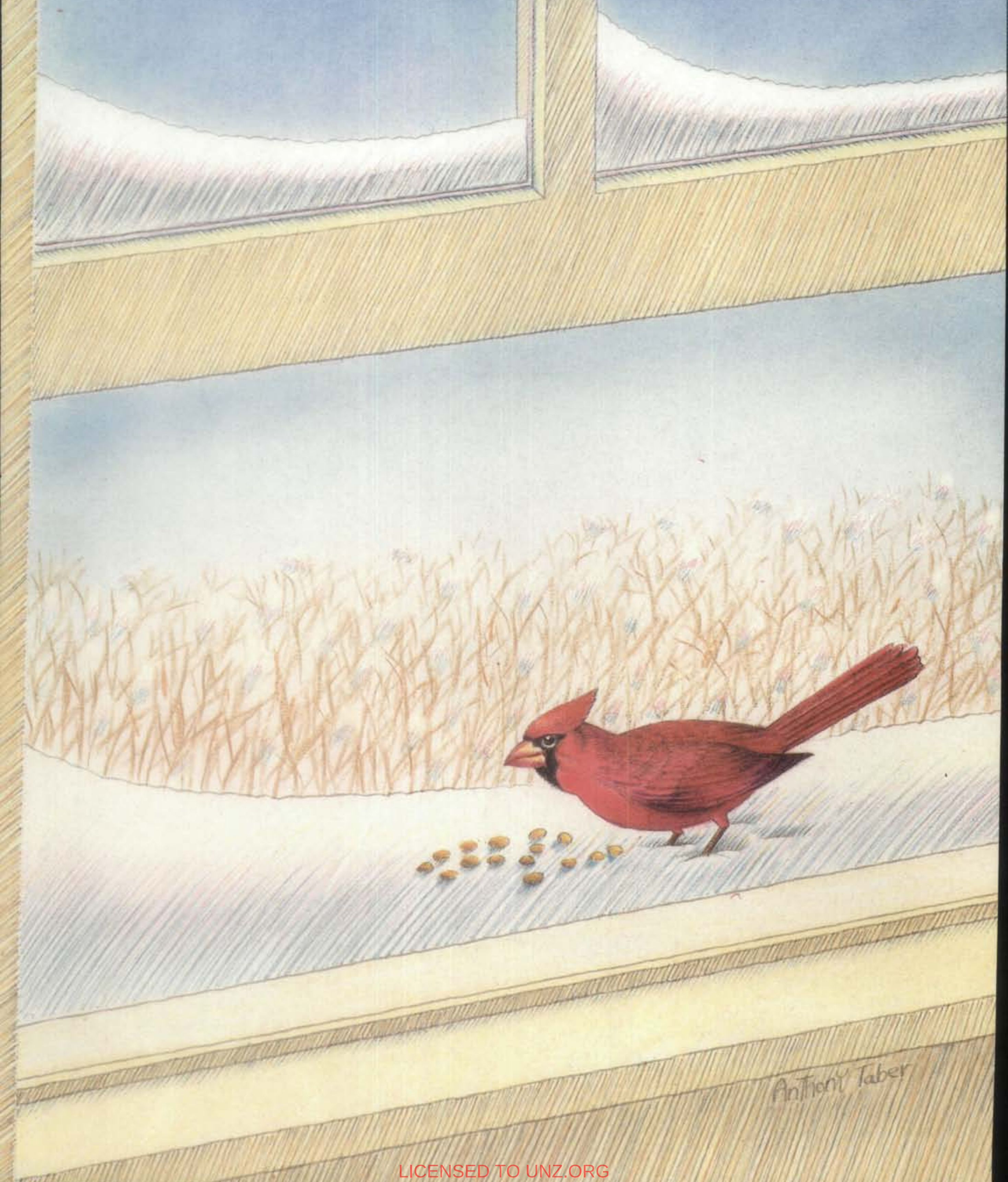
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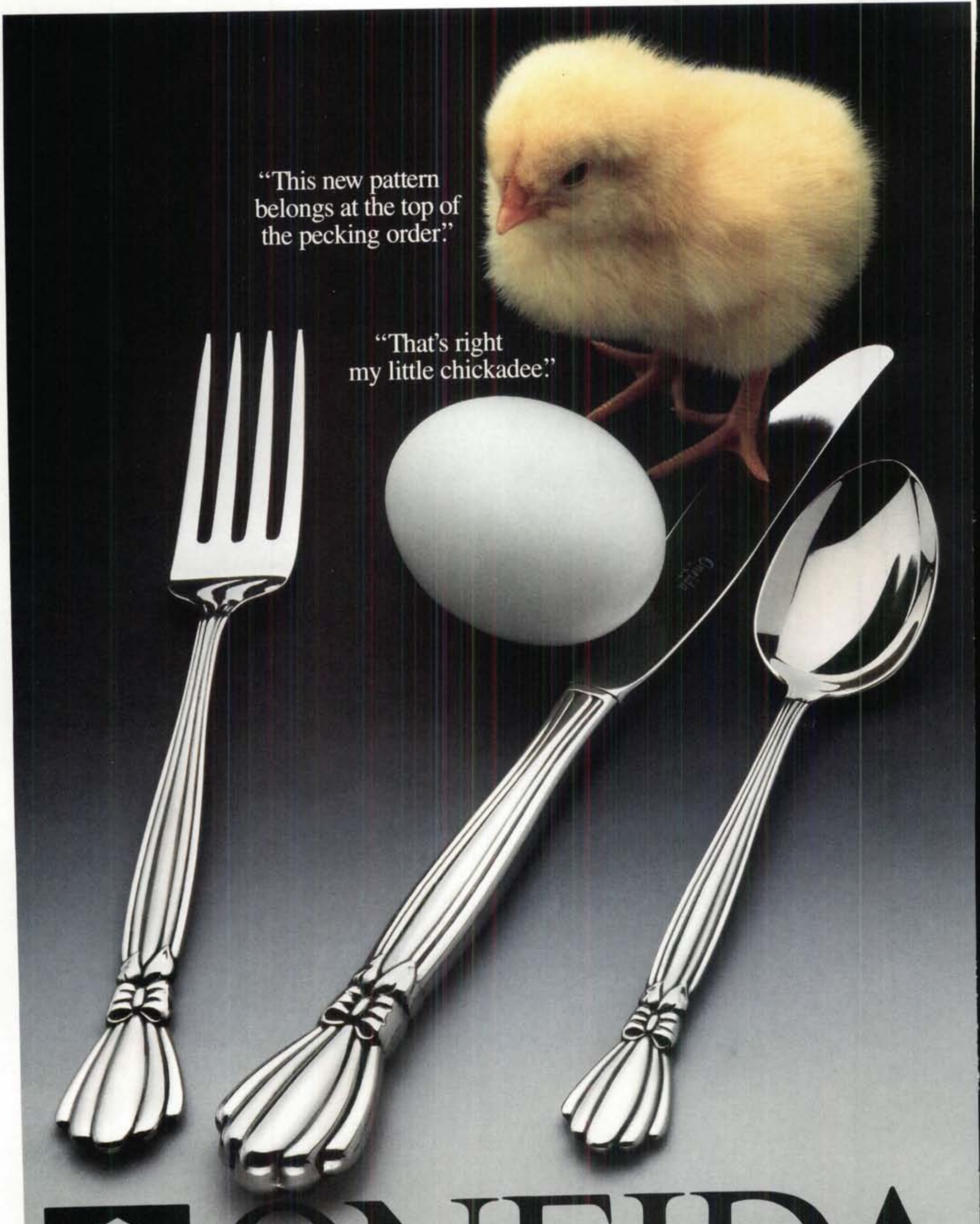
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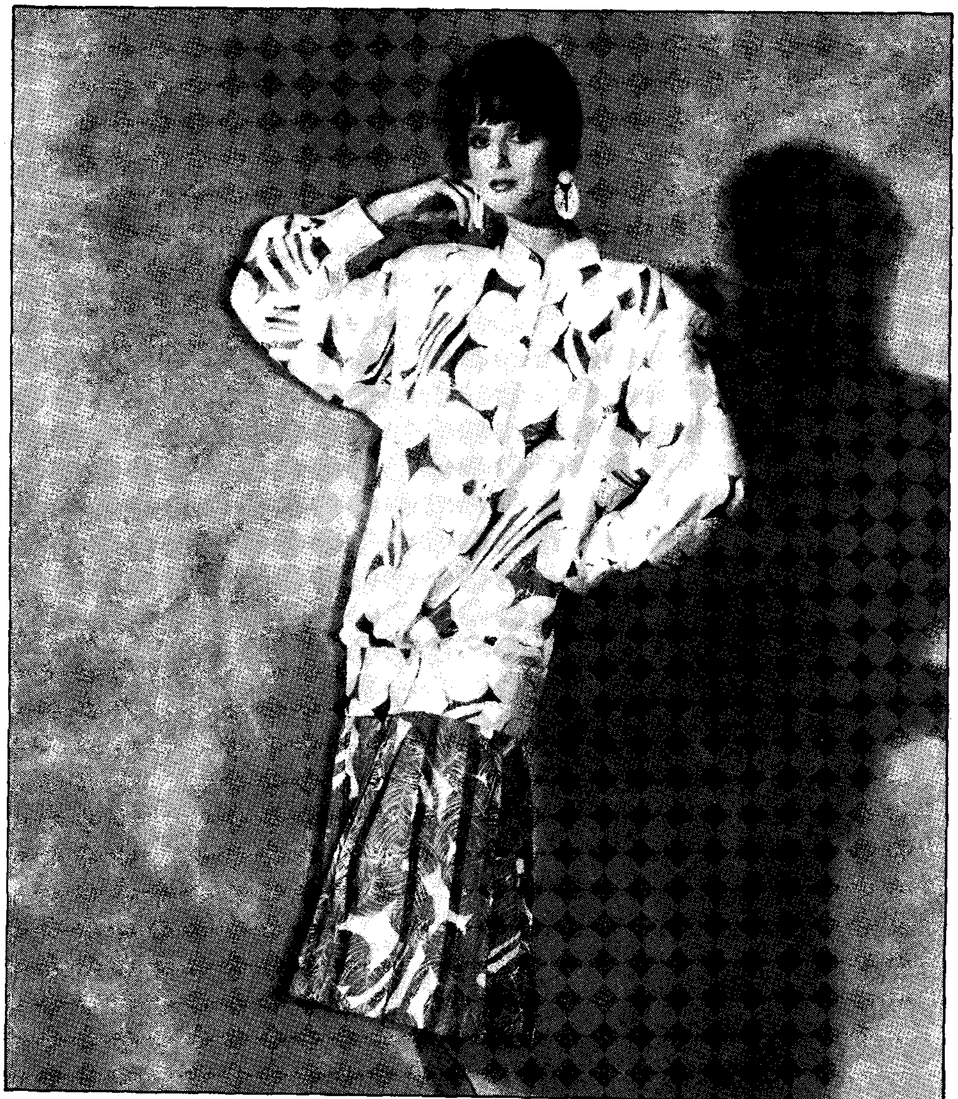

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

A CONSCIENTIOUS CALENDAR OF EVENTS OF INTEREST

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THE THEATRE

PLAYS AND MUSICALS

Africanis Instructus—A musical with a score by Stanley Silverman and a book by Richard Foreman, who is also the director. Presented by the Music-Theatre Group of the Lenox Arts Center. Previews Wednesday, Jan. 22. Opens officially on Thursday, Jan. 23, and will run through Saturday, Feb. 15. (St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. 265-4375. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 9:30. Matinées Wednesdays at 2.)

Aunt Dan & Lemon—A series of extended conversations about good and evil, interspersed with melodrama. The author is Wallace Shawn, and the admirable direction is by Max Stafford-Clark. (Reviewed in our issue of 11/4/85.) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly at 8. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, Jan. 26.)

Benefactors—The moral of this harsh and yet continuously entertaining play by Michael Frayn is that no good deed goes unpunished. The cast consists of Glenn Close, Sam Waterston, Mary Beth Hurt, and Simon Jones, and the direction is by Michael Blakemore. (1/6/86) (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 719-4099. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Big River—William Hauptman and Roger Miller have drawn an agreeably sentimental musical out of "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" and Mark Twain in Heaven has reason to be satisfied with the results. (5/13/85) (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Blood Knot—Zakes Mokae and Athol Fugard in what is sure to be considered the classic presentation of Fugard's classic work. (12/23/85) (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

The Caretaker—The Steppenwolf Theatre Company of Chicago's production of the Harold Pinter play, with Jeff Perry, Gary Sinise, and Alan Wilder. Directed by John Malkovich. Previews through Wednesday, Jan. 29. Opens officially on Thursday, Jan. 30. (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8; opening-night curtain at 6:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Circle Repertory Company—Nancy Donohue's romantic comedy **the beach house**, which is sometimes amusing, sometimes just silly, seems to belong more to the late thirties than to the present. Its flaws are more than redeemed by the beguiling performance of Swoosie Kurtz as Her, by the splendid performance of George Grizzard as Him, and by the touching performance of Robert Leonard as his fifteen-year-old son. Melvin Bernhardt was the deft director. (12/30/85) (99 Seventh Ave. S., at Sheridan Sq. 924-7100. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, Feb. 2.)

Corpse!—A so-called comedy thriller that is more comic than thrilling, but Keith Baxter and Milo O'Shea have such a good time piling up corpses that they prove irresistible. (1/20/86) (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Curse of the Starving Class—A revival of Sam Shepard's brilliant, humorous, passionate play. (9/2/85) (890 Theatre, Broadway at 19th St. 533-8834. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 2:30 and Sundays at 3.)

Dames at Sea—A revival of a musical by Jim Wise (score) and George Haimsohn and Robin Miller (book and lyrics). (Lambs, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

December Seventh—A play by George Rattner, presented by Henry Street Settlement's New Federal Theatre. (Theatre Guinevere, 15 W. 28th St. 679-9071. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3. Closes Sunday, Feb. 2.)

Drinking in America—Eric Bogosian in a one-man show. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 247-0393. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Equity Library Theatre—A revival of the 1979 musical **they're playing our song** (book by Neil Simon, music by Marvin Hamlisch, and lyrics by Carole Bayer Sager) is the fourth in this season's series of eight productions. (103rd St. and Riverside Dr. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2:30. Closes Sunday, Feb. 2. For information about tickets, for which contributions are requested, call 663-2028.)

Gertrude Stein and a Companion—A play by Win Wells, about Miss Stein and Alice B Toklas, with Jan Miner and Marian Seldes (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at and Sundays at 3.)

The Golden Land—An extremely sentimenta musical about Jewish immigrants to th United States. The company of three me and three women includes a fine singe named Marc Krause. (12/2/85) (Secon Avenue Theatre, 189 Second Ave., at 12th St 674-1460. Wednesdays through Saturdays a 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays a 2:30, and Sundays at 1 and 5.)

El Grande de Coca-Cola—A revival of the 197 musical revue, with the original cast—Ro House, Diz White, Alan Shearman—who ar the authors, along with John Neville-Andrews. Opens Wednesday, Jan. 22. (Villag Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 473-7270. Opening night curtain at 6:45; thereafter, Tuesday through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 1 and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Sundays a 3.)

Hay Fever—Noël Coward's comedy, written a the beginning of his career, seems ligh enough for the mildest summer breeze t blow it away, but in the hands of a good cas it proves to be as strong as steel. The cast the present production, headed by Rosemar

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Harris, isn't merely good—it is perfect. (12/23/85) (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

I'm Not Rappaport—Herb Gardner's synthetic, though often entertaining, comedy about two old men who share a bench in Central Park is given an expert performance by Cleavon Little and Judd Hirsch. (6/17/85) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

In the Boom Boom Room—A newly rewritten version of David Rabe's 1973 play, with Liz McDonald. (South Street Theatre, 424 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

It's Only a Play—Terrence McNally is an extremely funny writer, and there is scarcely a moment throughout the course of this examination of the suffering of a young playwright on the opening night of his latest play which doesn't induce helpless laughter. With James Coco, Mark Blum, Christine Baranski, Paul Benedict, Joanna Gleason, and David Garrison. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Manhattan Theatre Club at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989. Nightly at 8. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 2:30. Closes Sunday, Jan. 26.)

Jerome Kern Goes to Hollywood—A revue conceived and directed by David Kernan, with songs by the composer, a book by Dick Vosburgh, and lyrics by Ira Gershwin, Dorothy Fields, and others. The production was originally seen in London last season. (Ritz, 219 W. 48th St. 582-4022. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Jerry's Girls—A Broadway novelty (and novelty is all it is), consisting of women who sing innumerable Jerry Herman songs and other women who do dance numbers. The "girls" include Dorothy Loudon, Leslie Uggams, and Chita Rivera. (1/6/86) (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 398-0280. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

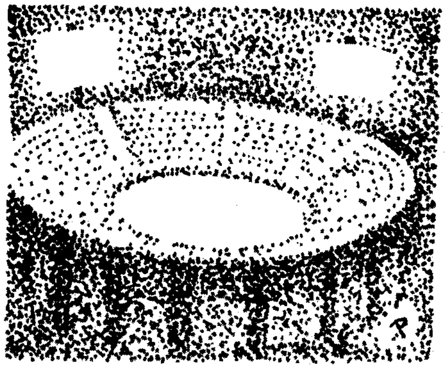
Jonin'—The characters here are members of a fraternity at a black college, who ceaselessly subject one another to merciless pranks and verbal mayhem, beginning to end. The play is abrasive and tough to watch, but there is life in it, all the same. Gerard Brown makes his début as dramatist. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Nightly at 8. Matinées Saturday and Sunday at 3. Closes Sunday, Jan. 26.)

A Lie of the Mind—Sam Shepard has devised a masterful comedy in this frightening tale of two Western families bound together by a dreadful marriage. The performances, under Mr. Shepard's direction, are extremely good, especially those by Amanda Plummer, Harvey Keitel, and Ann Wedgeworth. (12/16/85) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313. Nightly, except Mondays, at 8. Matinées Sundays at 2:30.)

Light Opera of Manhattan—Presenting Gilbert and Sullivan's **THE MIKADO.** (Norman Thomas, 111 E. 33rd St. 532-6180. Friday, Jan. 24, at 8; Saturday, Jan. 25, at 3:30 and 8; and Sunday, Jan. 26, at 3:30.)

Lillian—A monologue starring Zoe Caldwell as Lillian Hellman. The text has been drawn by William Luce from Hellman's several volumes of reminiscences. It appears that Miss Caldwell could impersonate George Washington and make us believe it. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Mrs. Warren's Profession—Uta Hagen gives a stunning performance, in Shaw's brilliant play, as a woman of lowly origins who has made a fortune from a string of brothels. There is distinguished acting, as well, by Pamela Reed, as her daughter, and Harris Yulin, as her business partner. (12/30/85) Reopens Thursday, Jan. 23, and will run through Sunday, Feb. 9. (Haft, 227 W. 27th St. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturday, Jan. 25, at 2, and Sundays at 3. For tickets, call 420-1883.)



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The Mystery of Edwin Drood—The novel that Dickens left unfinished at the time of his sudden death has been turned into a splendidly nonsensical musical by Rupert Holmes. The big cast is headed by George Rose and the direction is by Wilford Leach. (12/16/85) (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Negro Ensemble Company—The second production of the season is **HOUSE OF SHADOWS,** a drama by Steve Carter. Previews through Thursday, Jan. 23. Opens officially on Friday, Jan. 24, and will run through Sunday, Feb. 16. (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 246-8545. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 8:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays at 3 and Sundays at 2:30.)

Nunsense—A musical by Dan Goggin. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

The Odd Couple—Neil Simon has turned his comedy about a pair of ill-matched men into a non-comedy about a pair of women the like of which has never been seen on earth, much less on Riverside Drive. (6/24/85) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Penn & Teller—A sublime combination of conjuring and comedy. Penn Jillette does the talking; Teller is silent. (5/6/85) (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394. Wednesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 3.)

Personals—A jaunty and romantic little revue about people looking for companionship of one sort or another in the classified ads. Talent abounds. Witty book and lyrics and tuneful score; performances by six gifted young actors. (Minetta Lane, 18-22 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

Prairie du Chien and **The Shawl**—Two brief, eerie plays by David Mamet. "The Shawl," a wonder, is about a clairvoyant who may be a charlatan (but perhaps not), his sly apprentice-lover, and a wary woman client. "Prairie du Chien," also good, is set aboard a train on which a man tells a horror story while a gin game erupts into violence. Both plays are performed to perfection under Gregory Mosher's direction, with Mike Nussbaum, Lindsay Crouse, and W. H. Macy, among other fine actors. (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays and Sundays at 2. Closes Sunday, Feb. 2.)

The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe—A one-person vaudeville show, starring the antic and frantic Lily Tomlin in a series of impersonations—some harsh, som tender—written for her by Jane Wagner (10/7/85) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239 6200. Tuesdays through Thursdays at 8 Fridays at 7 and 10; and Saturdays at 8 Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2.)

Singin' in the Rain—An unwelcome curiosity which attempts to translate an immorta movie musical into a Broadway show; every one concerned has labored hard, always i vain. (7/15/85) (Gershwin, 51st St. west o Broadway. 586-6510. Tuesdays through Sat urdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Sat urdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.)

Song and Dance—Imported from England an tricked up for the American trade, thi uneasy linking of song (first act) and danc (second act) is redeemed in part by the at tractiveness of the chief performers, Ber nadette Peters and Victor Barbee. (9/30/85 (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Nightly except Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesday and Saturdays at 2.)

Today I Am a Fountain Pen—A play by Israe Horovitz, presented by the American Jewis Theatre. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. a 92nd St. 831-8603. Tuesdays through Thurs days and Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7 Matinées Sundays at 2. Closes Sunday, Feb 9.)

Uptown . . . It's Hot!—A musical productio highlighting the music associated with nota ble black performers of the past fifty year Conceived and directed by its star, Mauric Hines, with a narration written by Jeffrey V Thompson and Marion Ramsey. Preview through Sunday, Jan. 26. Opens officially o Tuesday, Jan. 28. (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W 46th St. 575-9200. Tuesdays through Satur days at 8; opening-night curtain at 6:30. Mat inées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, an Sundays at 3.)

What's a Nice Country Like You . . . Doing in State Like This?—An updated version of th 1973 satirical revue by the original creator composer Cary Hoffman and lyricist Ira Gas man. (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S at Sheridan Sq. 691-6226. Tuesdays throug Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; an Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3. Close Sunday, Feb. 2.)

Long Runs—**BILOXI BLUES:** A chapter in the lif story of Eugene Morris Jerome, a literar stand-in for the author, Neil Simon. The tim is 1943, Eugene is in the Army, and his ad ventures in Biloxi are truly not to be believe The director, Gene Saks, has worked hard t squeeze the last drop of humor out of thi peculiar fruit. (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St 757-8646. Nightly, except Sundays and Thurs days, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Satur days at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **BRIGHTO BEACH MEMOIRS:** Neil Simon looks back furthe —and fondly—upon his youth in the gloom thirties. (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46t St. 221-1211. Tuesdays through Saturdays a 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LA CAGE AUX FOLLES:** musical about a pair of tenderhearted middle aged lovers presiding over a drag-queen nigh club in Saint-Tropez; the production is on of the most beautiful—and extravagant— ever to reach Broadway. Jerry Herman wrot the music and lyrics; the book is by Harve Fierstein. (Palace, Broadway at 47th St 757-2626. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8 Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.) . . . **CATS:** Some twent poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to musi by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacl about mighty little, owing its effectiveness t Trevor Nunn's direction and to the sets an costumes by John Napier. (Winter Garden Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. Nightly, ex cept Sundays, at 8. Matinées Wednesday and Saturdays at 2.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** group of young dancers audition for a handfu of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsa and by the time the evening is over we kno everything about all of them. (Shubert, 22 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Nightly, except Sun days, at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Satur days at 2.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** 10,712 per formances so far. (Sullivan Street Play house, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674 3838. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Satur days at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7:30. Mat

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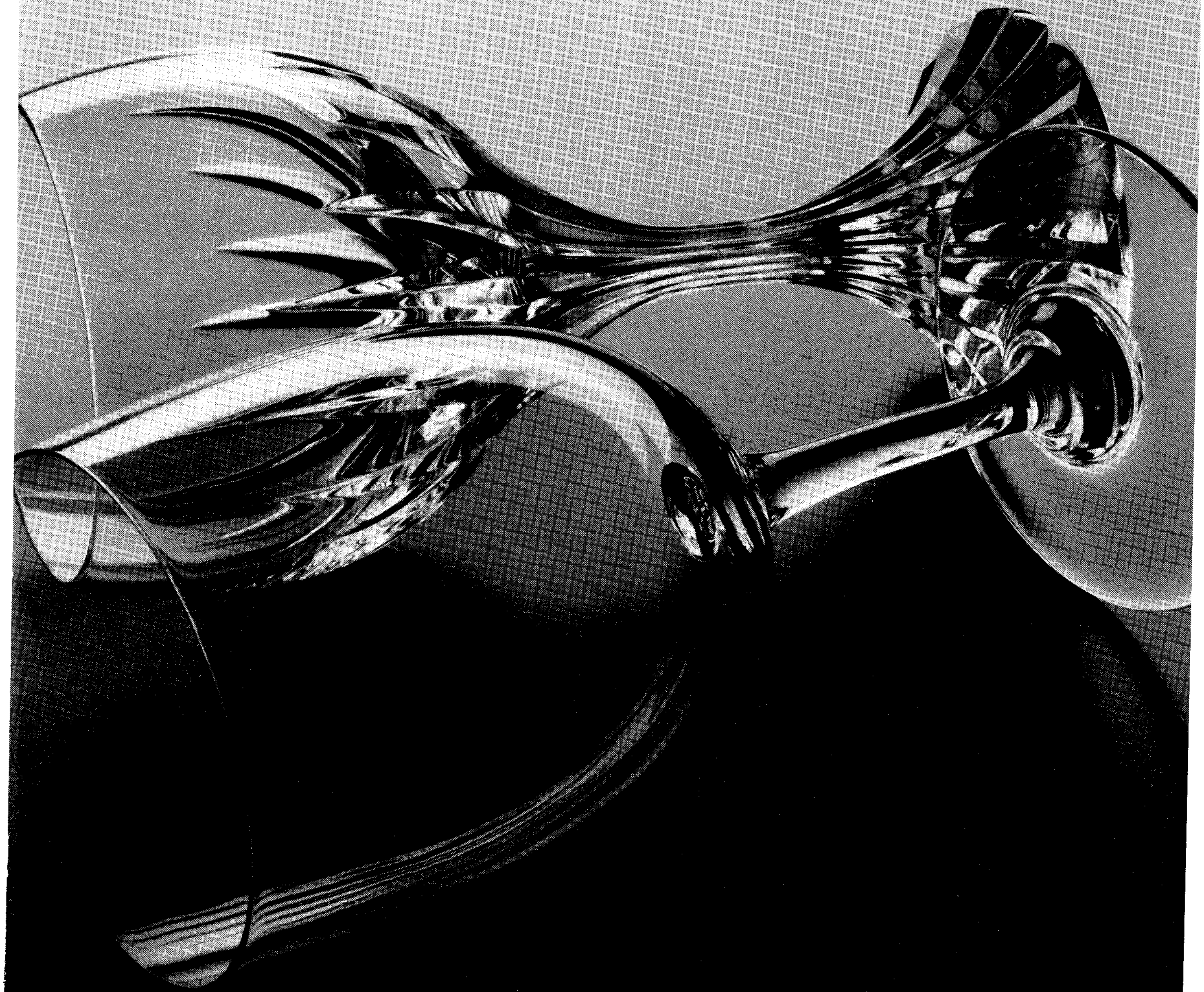

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

inées Sundays at 3.) . . . **THE FOREIGNER:** A very funny play by the late Larry Shue, with good performances by every single member of the company. Jerry Zaks was the admirable director. (Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 10; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.) . . . **42ND STREET:** A musical based on the old Warner Brothers movie and by no means an improvement on it. Directed and choreographed by the late Gower Champion. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8. Matinées Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2, and Sundays at 3.) . . . **LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS:** Taking off from Roger Corman's 1960 horror quickie about a man-eating plant, this exuberant, jokey musical is wholly free of camp. The score is by Alan Menken, and Howard Ashman directed and wrote the book and lyrics. Martin P. Robinson designed the menacing plant. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 239-6200. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, and Saturdays at 7 and 10. Matinées Sundays at 2 and 5.) . . . **OH! CALCUTTA!:** A collection of short sketches that purport to give us a refreshing view of sex and do not. (Edison, 240 W. 47th St. 302-2302. Mondays through Fridays at 8; Saturdays at 7 and 9:30; and Sundays at 7. Matinées Sundays at 3.)

MISCELLANY

ICE SHOW—"Ice Capades," with Robin Cousins. Opens Wednesday, Jan. 29, and will run through Sunday, Feb. 9. (Madison Square Garden. 564-4400. Wednesday, Jan. 29, at 7:30; Thursday, Jan. 30, at 10:30 and 7:30; Friday, Jan. 31, at 7:30; and Saturday, Feb. 1, at 11, 3, and 7:30.)

DANCE

NEW YORK CITY BALLET—Tentative schedule—Wednesday, Jan. 22, at 8: "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue," "Allegro Brillante," "Eight More," and the opening scene from "A Midsummer Night's Dream." (A benefit performance; for tickets call 877-7635.) . . . ¶ Thursday, Jan. 23, at 8: "Allegro Brillante," "Davidsbündlertänze," and "Glass Pieces." . . . ¶ Friday, Jan. 24, at 8: "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue," "Poulenc Sonata," and "Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 2." . . . ¶ Saturday, Jan. 25, at 2: "Rossini Quartets," "Poulenc Sonata," and "Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 2." . . . ¶ Saturday, Jan. 25, at 8: "Allegro Brillante," "In Memory of . . . ," and "Gounod Symphony." . . . ¶ Sunday, Jan. 26, at 1: "Donizetti Variations," "Poulenc Sonata," and "Brahms-Schoenberg Quartet." . . . ¶ Sunday, Jan. 26, at 7: "Allegro Brillante," "The Cage," "Valse-Fantaisie," and "Gounod Symphony." . . . ¶ Tuesday, Jan. 28, at 8: "Donizetti Variations," "Slaughter on Tenth Avenue," and "Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 2." . . . ¶ Wednesday, Jan. 29, at 8: "Allegro Brillante," "In Memory of . . . ," and "Gounod Symphony." . . . ¶ Thursday and Friday, Jan. 30-31, at 8: "A Midsummer Night's Dream." . . . ¶ Saturday, Feb. 1, at 2: "Donizetti Variations," "In Memory of . . . ," and "Gershwin Concerto." . . . ¶ Saturday, Feb. 1, at 8: "Rossini Quartets," "Valse Triste," "Eight More," and "Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 2." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Through Sunday, Feb. 23.)

BALLET DE SANTIAGO—A one-week engagement—Wednesday through Friday, Jan. 22-24, at 8: "Rosalinda." . . . ¶ Saturday, Jan. 25, at 8, and Sunday, Jan. 26, at 3 and 7:30: "Double Clef," "The Storm," and "Three Japanese Dances." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 246-8989.)

TANGO ARGENTINO—A troupe of thirty dancers, singers, and musicians. (Mark Hellinger Theatre, 237 W. 51st St. 757-7064. Tuesdays through Saturdays at 8, and Sundays at 7:30. Matinées Saturdays at 2 and Sundays at 3.)

ELISA MONTE DANCE COMPANY—"Anima," "Pigs & Fishes," "Overture," "VII for VIII," and "Set in Stone." With musical accompaniment by David Van Tieghem and his ensemble. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Wednesday through Friday, Jan. 22-24, at 8; Saturday, Jan. 25, at 2 and 8; and Sunday, Jan. 26, at 2 and 7:30.)

SUSAN MARSHALL & COMPANY—"Arena," "Opening Gambits," "Kin," and "Arms." (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Thursday through Saturday, Jan. 23-25, at 8, and Sunday, Jan. 26, at 3.)

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LUCINDA CHILDS DANCE COMPANY—Opening performances of a two-week engagement that will run through Sunday, Feb. 9—Tuesday, Jan. 28, at 7:30, and Wednesday through Friday, Jan. 29-31, at 8: "Portraits in Reflection" (première). . . . ¶ Saturday, Feb. 1, at 8: Dance No. 1 from "Dance" and Field Dances from "Einstein on the Beach." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800.)

ALVIN AILEY REPERTORY ENSEMBLE—Programs of new and repertory works. (Theatre of the Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 120th St. 864-2929. Wednesday through Friday, Jan. 22-24, at 8, and Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 25-26, at 2 and 8.)

NIGHT LIFE

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Michael Feinstein, a Gershwin scholar, sings and plays piano Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen in the Oak Room. Dining.

ANGRY SQUIRE, 216 Seventh Ave., at 23rd St. (242-9066)—A nautical bar and restaurant and music haunt. The lineup: Wednesday, Jan. 22, singer Carla White and her trio; Thursday, Jan. 23, the Joel Forrester quartet; Friday and Saturday, Jan. 24-25, **CHARLI PERSIP'S** Super Four; Sunday, Jan. 26, Over Easy; Monday, Jan. 27, the George King quartet; Tuesday, Jan. 28, the Dave Regan quartet; Wednesday, Jan. 29, singer Judy Niemack and a trio; Thursday, Jan. 30, the Jerry Sokoloff quintet; and Friday and Saturday, Jan. 31-Feb. 1, baritone saxophonist **PEPPER ADAMS.** Sets begin Sundays through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays and Saturdays at ten.

BALLROOM, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—**BLOSSOM DEARIE** is ensconced in this club, singing in her small, delicate, uncomplicated, diction-perfect voice. Early-evening concerts Wednesdays through Saturdays from six-thirty to eight-thirty. Harmonica virtuoso **LARRY ADLER** performs Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine and eleven.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—The jazz: pianist **BILLY TAYLOR** and his trio alternate with drummer **JOE MORELLO** and his quintet through Sunday, Jan. 26; Monday, Jan. 27, will belong to the **JAMES WILLIAMS** All-Stars; starting Tuesday, Jan. 28, singer **JEAN CARNE** will come in with her quintet, which will feature drummer **NORMAN CONNORS.**

Music from nine. **TED CURSON** conducts after-hours jams every night but Monday, following the last set and lasting until about four. Dining.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—The oh-so-varied lineup: Wednesday, Jan. 22, jazz violinist **MICHAL URBANIAK;** Friday, Jan. 24, 10,000 Maniacs; Saturday, Jan. 25, the Uncle Floyd Show; and Friday, Jan. 31, Gary U.S. Bonds, La Bamba & the Hubcaps, and Ellen Foley. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Dining.

BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A convivial, dark-panelled real New York bar with real New York live jazz. **RAY BRYANT** and **JIMMY ROWSER** continue their piano-bass collaboration here through Saturday, Jan. 25, and on Sunday, Jan. 26, pianist **KIRK LIGHTSEY** and bassist **SANTI DEBRIANO** will move in for a week. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—In the Café Carlyle, pianist and occasional singer **GEORGE SHEARING** and bassist **DON THOMPSON** can be heard Tuesdays through Saturdays at ten and midnight. . . . ¶ And over in the Bemelmans Bar you will find singer and pianist **BARBARA CARROLL** performing from ten Tuesdays through Saturdays.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—Exposed rafters, weathered, splintery wood posts, decrepit neon beer signs, and a general ramshackle feel. All this and rock and roll, too. Monday is showcase night. Shows nightly from long after nine-thirty.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—Behind a dark, unprepossessing, easy-to-miss front door, down a corridor with industrial-strength corrugated-metal walls (the kind that would tempt any kid with a stick), and down a flight of stairs, there is this snazzy, cozy jazz room. Star percussionist **NANA VASCONCELOS** sits in with the **NEW YORK SAMBA BAND** through Sunday, Jan. 26, and starting Tuesday, Jan. 28, two very fine guitarists, **LARRY CORYELL** and **EMILY REMLER,** will take over. Mondays are claimed by guitarist and inventor **LES PAUL,** the Thomas Edison of reverb, who was once known as Rhubarb Red. Sets begin Sundays through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight. Dining.

FOLK CITY, 130 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (254-8449)—Considerably more musical than Tie City or Food City. Wednesday, Jan. 22, **SALEM 66,** the Lone Cowboys, and Dinosaur; Thursday, Jan. 23, Ilene Weiss; Friday, Jan. 24, **CAROLYN HESTER** and **PATRICK SKY;** Wednesday, Jan. 29, the Turbines and the Smithereens; and Saturday, Feb. 1, **MELANIE.** Shows are usually at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Sundays are comedy nights, and Mondays are hootenanny nights.

FREDDY'S, 308 E. 49th St. (888-1633)—Straight-arrow baritone and pianist **RONNY WHYTE** is here with bassist **FRANK TATE** Tuesdays through Saturdays from ten-thirty. Dining. Closed Sundays.

GREGORY'S, 1149 First Ave., at 63rd St. (371-2220)—Alicia Sherman sings with Peter Madsen and Phil Bowler Wednesdays through Saturdays; Sundays and Mondays belong to pianist and singer **BOB DOROUGH** and bassist **BILL TAKAS;** and Tuesdays belong to **CHUCK WAYNE** and his trio. All these groups begin about ten.

HANRATTY'S, 1754 Second Ave., at 91st St. (289-3200)—A spiffy bar and back-room restaurant with a piano in it. **ROGER KELLAWAY** is the pianist through Saturday, Jan. 25. Sundays, Keith MacDonald owns the keyboard, and on Mondays you can hear **DICK HYMAN.** Music Sundays through Thursdays from eight-thirty, and Fridays and Saturdays from nine.

KNICKERBOCKER SALOON, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A pleasant corner restaurant and bar that is crowded with good listeners listening to **FRED HERSCH** and **GEORGE MRAZ** through Saturday, Jan. 25, and to **KENNY BARRON** and **CECIL MC BEE** beginning Tuesday, Jan. 28. Music from about nine-thirty.

LONE STAR CAFÉ, 61 Fifth Ave., at 13th St. (242-1664)—No, this isn't the Department of Rockabilly at the New School. It's a degen-

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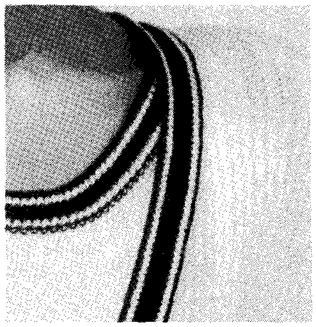
ORIENT EXPRESS.

Months before our buyer arrives in Hong Kong to supervise the construction of our private label knitwear collection, she's planning ahead with our Office of Fashion Communications. When she's confident of style, fiber and color decisions, she ships sketches and colors to our Far East garment houses for sample preparation and color lab dipping.



Once in Hong Kong, she supervises the checking and rechecking of the counter samples. Is it the best it can be? Should we add, change or drop a color? Hours are spent with technicians perfecting each sample — fitting, measuring, trimming and redesigning until it sports the character of an N-M garment. Being this particular can cost a pretty penny, but our buyer accepts nothing but the best possible price, so we can give our customers exclusive merchandise at a good value. Exclusive — a word you've come to associate with Neiman-Marcus. When we say our private label knitwear collection is available exclusively at N-M, we mean it. And that means when you collect it you'll be in very exclusive company. Sport Shop.

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trified Schrafft's where the authentic Texas ambience is more representative of Austin than of Houston or Dallas. The folk, country, blues, and rock: Wednesday and Thursday, Jan. 22-23, guitarist Pat Travers; Friday and Saturday, Jan. 24-25, the **FLESHTONES**; Monday through Wednesday, Jan. 27-29, Black Tie, with Randy Meisner, Bernie Leadon, Jimmy Griffin, and Billy Swan; Thursday, Jan. 30, ex-Band members singer-bassist **RICK DANKO** and keyboardist **RICHARD MANUEL**; and Friday and Saturday, Jan. 31-Feb. 1, blues guitarist and singer **JOHNNY COPELAND.** Music after nine. Dining.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—**BARBARA COOK,** who possesses a clear-as-a-bell voice, sings Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine and eleven. On most Mondays, Woody Allen sits in on clarinet with a New Orleans-style outfit. Dining. Closed Sundays.

Mikell's, 760 Columbus Ave., at 97th St. (864-8832)—The music scene here is cooler than a Columbus Avenue gelato and the music hotter than a Columbus Avenue taco. Wednesday, Jan. 22, **TOM PIERSON**; Thursday, Jan. 23, Daniel Wilensky; Friday and Saturday, Jan. 24-25, singer Robbie Dupree; Monday, Jan. 27, **JUMP STREET**; Tuesday, Jan. 28, Frank Canino; Wednesday, Jan. 29, BMF Sextet; Thursday, Jan. 30, Bobby Thomas; and Friday and Saturday, Jan. 31-Feb. 1, Mirage. Music from about ten until two. Dining.

Ritz, 119 E. 11th St. (254-2800)—Rock from the fifties to the eighties in a half-century-old ballroom. Thursday, Jan. 23, African-music and reggae night, with **SAN FAN THOMAS,** the **AFRICAN CONNECTION,** and **SISTER CAROL**; Friday, Jan. 24, the Dictators and the Rattlers; Saturday, Jan. 25, the Cruzados; Sunday, Jan. 26, the Toy Dolls, the Dickies, Legal Weapon, and Doggie Style; Monday and Tuesday, Jan. 27-28, **JERRY GARCIA** and, before he comes out, chants of "Jerry! Jerry! Jerry!;" Friday, Jan. 31, Blancmange; and Saturday, Feb. 1, the Replacements. Shows Mondays through Thursdays at nine, and Fridays and Saturdays at eleven. Dancing.

Sounds of Brazil, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A great place to listen to Brazilian, Caribbean, and African music—Brazilian-jazz groups, samba bands, reggae-ists, and all-percussion ensembles that perform *carnaval* music—and it tends to be swirling, heady, wonderful stuff. Wednesday, Jan. 22, free reggae-ists **OLIVER LAKE & JUMP UP**; Thursday, Jan. 23, Adja; Friday, Jan. 24, Magnum Band; Saturday, Jan. 25, **PÉ-DE-BOI**; Tuesday, Jan. 28, Brazuca; Wednesday, Jan. 29, Suso; Thursday, Jan. 30, Kimati Dinizulu & the Kotoko Society; and Friday, Jan. 31, **AFRICAN CONNECTION.** Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—**RON CARTER,** a magical bassist—just watch his left hand—guides his quartet through Sunday, Jan. 26, and starting Tuesday, Jan. 28, **AHMAD JAMAL,** the rhapsodic pianist, will arrive with his trio. Mondays are blues-and-ballad opportunities for singer **DAKOTA STATON.** Shows from about ten. Dining.

Tramps, 125 E. 15th St. (777-5077)—An unplush and to-the-point music hangout: Wednesday, Jan. 22, Hoy Boy & the Doys; Friday and Saturday, Jan. 24-25, **BUSTER POINDEXTER & THE BANSHEES OF BLUE**; Sunday, Jan. 26, Lew Willie & the Snap Dragons; Monday, Jan. 27, Shot in the Dark; Tuesday, Jan. 28, the Bullies; and Friday and Saturday, Jan. 31-Feb. 1, Midnight Creepers. Thursday night is zydeco night with Loup Gurou. Music after nine-thirty.

Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—The Top of the Gate will jump on Saturday, Jan. 25, with a swing-music-and-jitterbug program performed by the **HARLEM BLUES & JAZZ BAND** and others, at nine and eleven. . . . ¶ Meanwhile, out on the Terrace, **HAROLD MABERN** and **JAMIL NASSER** supply bluesy piano-bass duets every night but Monday, Jan. 27, when the proceedings will consist of **JUNIOR MANCE & MARTY RIVERA.** Music from about nine-thirty. And, in addition, jazz harpist **DAPHNE HELLMAN** plays Tuesdays with her combo.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—People from all over the world are attracted to this famous, unpretentious basement establishment, fifty-one years old this year. Bebopster **JAMES MOODY** is on hand with his quartet through Sunday, Jan. 26, and on Tuesday, Jan. 28, five impressive players—bassist **RICHARD DAVIS,** pianist **ROLAND HANNA,** drummer **FREDDIE WAITS,** tenor saxophonist **RICKY FORD,** and trumpeter **HANNIBAL MARVIN PETERSON**—will arrive. Mondays are **MEL LEWIS BIG BAND** nights. Music after nine-thirty.

West End, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (666-8750)—Past the steam tables of piping-hot student food (Columbia University is just across Broadway), beyond the pinball machines is a room full of live jazz. The **BIG NICK NICHOLAS** quintet makes a big sound through Sunday, Jan. 26; starting Wednesday, Jan. 29, the Chip White quintet will provide the music. Tuesdays are reserved for trumpeter Valery Ponomarev. Music nightly, except Mondays, from about nine.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A spacious, airy bar connected to a spacious, airy dining room by a spacious, airy passageway with tables and chairs and pianists or guitarists and bassists in it. **HILTON RUIZ,** a driving, bop-derived pianist, and **MAJOR HOLLEY,** a humming, buzzing, bowing Slam Stewart-derived bassist, work together nightly, except Sundays, which are given over to guitarist **GENE BERTONCINI** and bassist **MICHAEL MOORE.** Music weeknights from eight and Sundays from seven.

JAZZ / FOLK / ROCK CONCERTS, PERSONAL APPEARANCES, ETC.

Acoustic Hot Tuna—Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 787-1477. Friday, Jan. 24, at 8.

Twisted Sister—Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 246-4600. Friday and Saturday, Jan. 24-25, at 8.

John Cephas & Phil Wiggins, John Jackson, and John Dee Holeman—Washington Square Church, 133 W. 4th St. 362-0290. Friday and Saturday, Jan. 24-25, at 8.

Slide Hampton and Barry Harris Trio—Jazz Cultural Theatre, Eighth Ave. between 28th and 29th Sts. 502-4300. Friday and Saturday, Jan. 24-25, at 10, 11:30, and 1.

Jazz Explosion—Two concerts featuring Roy Ayers, Ramsey Lewis, Phyllis Hyman, and others. (Beacon Theatre. Saturday, Jan. 25, at 8 and midnight.)

Lyrics and Lyricists—The first in a series of five programs entitled "Broadway Songs of the Forties: The American Musical Comes of Age," this one featuring Rex Reed as narrator. (Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Sunday, Jan. 26, at 2:30 and 8, and Monday, Jan. 27, at 8.)

James Brown—Radio City Music Hall. Wednesday, Jan. 29, at 8.

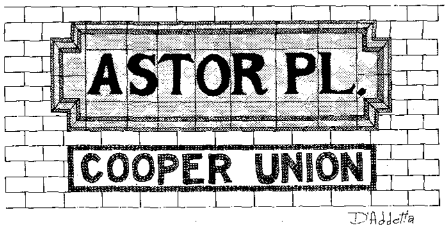
Joseph Jarman Quartet—Alternative Museum. 17 White St. 966-4444. Wednesday, Jan. 29, at 8.

Pia Zadora—With Johnny Yune. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Friday, Jan. 31, at 8.)

C-Sharpe Quartet—With Bucky Thorpe. (Jazz Cultural Theatre. Friday, Jan. 31, at 10, 11:30, and 1.)

Bill Cosby—The first five in a series of ten performances. (Radio City Music Hall. Friday, Jan. 31, at 8; Saturday, Feb. 1, at 2:30 and 8; and Sunday, Feb. 2, at 3 and 8.)

Steven Wright—With Leon Redbone. (Beacon Theatre. Saturday, Feb. 1, at 8 and 11.)



Hildegarde—With Charles Pierce and others. (Carnegie Hall. Saturday, Feb. 1, at 8.)

Gospel Tradition—With the Fairfield Four, the Faithful Harmonizers, and the Mt. Zion Pentecostal Young People's Choir. (Washington Square Church. Saturday, Feb. 1, at 8.)

Irving Plaza—Friday, Jan. 24: Urban Blight and City Beat. . . . ¶ Saturday, Jan. 25: Vernon Reid's Living Colour and DJ Afrika Bambaataa. . . . ¶ Friday, Jan. 31: The Tailgators and Barrence Whitfield & the Savages. (17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. 477-3728. Shows begin after 10.)

Jazz on Television—A series of programs featuring jazz performers on TV during the past thirty years is being given at the Museum of Broadcasting, 1 E. 53rd St., through Thursday, Jan. 30. (For information about scheduling, call 752-4690.)

ART

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Horst Antes—A retrospective of paintings. Through Feb. 22. (Lefebre, 47 E. 77th St.)

Peter Booth—Earthy paintings in earthy colors, by an Australian artist, of creatures that seem half human and half animal, or rocks on a barren ground. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (CDS Gallery, 13 E. 75th St. Open Mondays.)

Friedel Dzubas—Recent acrylics by a color-field painter. Through Feb. 6. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St.)

Paul Frazier—Abstract wood sculptures. Through Tuesday, Jan. 28. (Sculpture Center, 167 E. 69th St.)

Darryl Hughto / Morton Livingston Schamberg (1881-1918)—Abstract paintings. / Pastel abstractions derived from machine forms. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (Salander-O'Reilly, 22 E. 80th St. Open Mondays.)

Leon Kelly (1901-82)—A retrospective of paintings and drawings by a Surrealist. Through Feb. 8. (A.M. Adler, 21 E. 67th St.)

Barry Ledoux—Sculptures. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (Willard, 29 E. 72nd St.)

Nancy Mitchnick—Paintings of landscapes and figures. Through Feb. 8. (Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.)

Carole Robb—Oil paintings depicting the myth of Apollo and Daphne in a contemporary setting. Through Saturday, Jan. 25. (Forum, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

Georges Rouault (1871-1958) **and Georg Baselitz / Wladimir Zabotin** (1884-1967)—Prints by these two artists which are being shown together. / Abstract drawings, most done in pencil. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (Kren, 22 E. 65th St.)

Jon Schueler—Three very large cloud studies of the Isle of Skye as seen from the painter's home there. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (Perlow, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

David Shapiro—New abstract paintings. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (Vanderwoude Tananbaum, 24 E. 81st St.)

Leonard Stokes—Paper collages, several of which suggest figures. Through Feb. 12. (Cordier & Ekstrom, 417 E. 75th St.)

Bernar Venet—Large pastel drawings of the artist's sculptures. Through Saturday, Jan. 25. (Castelli Graphics, 4 E. 77th St.)

Group Shows—At the **FOURCADE,** 36 E. 75th St.: Drawings by gallery regulars, who include de Kooning, Heizer, and Rockburne. Through Feb. 8. . . . **STONE,** 48 E. 86th St.: Comic photomontages by John O'Reilly in which he insinuates pictures of himself, usually nude, rubbing elbows with Picasso; abstract paintings and tiny constructions (power boats, for instance), by Charles Mingus III, a son of the musician; and other works. Through Wednesday, Jan. 29.

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

Joseph Beuys—A display of the materials the artist used in a performance work called "Is It About a Bicycle?": texts written on blackboards, which also have treadmarks from the

In just one shave, this man will change his shaving habits.

His skin will be smooth. Look sleek. Feel fine. Will stay that way longer than usual.

Because of a fact dermatologists have always known: You get a comfortable close shave only when you have enough vital lubricants. And a cream formulation holds more of these than a foam. That's why Clinique developed Cream Shave.

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

bicycle (itself on hand). Through Feb. 8. (Marisa del Re, 41 E. 57th St.)

Deborah Butterfield—Table-size horses cast in bronze. Through Feb. 28. (Heesy, 50 W. 57th St.)

Richard Crozier—Paintings of landscapes common to daily experience—uncultivated roadsides and parking lots, for instance. Through Saturday, Jan. 25. (Tatistcheff, 50 W. 57th St.)

Jim Dine—Painted cast-bronze sculptures of motifs from earlier paintings (hearts, heads of Nancy, etc.); a large-scale painted three-dimensional piece combining wood, steel, and tools; plus paintings, drawings, and prints. Through Feb. 15. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.)

Willard Dixon and Jim Touchton—Recent paintings by two landscapists. Through Wednesday, Jan. 29. (Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Bruce Dorfman—Color-field paintings. Through Feb. 14. (Arras, 24 W. 57th St., and 725 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.; the latter is open Mondays.)

Sondra Freckelton—Still-lifes in pastel and watercolor. Through Wednesday, Jan. 29. (Schoelkopf, 50 W. 57th St.)

Robert Greene—Paintings. Through Saturday, Jan. 25. (Robert Miller, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Dieter Hacker—Oils, works on paper, and bronzes. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Reuben Kadish / Charles Biederman—Bronze and terra-cotta heads commemorating the fortieth anniversary of the Holocaust. / Small abstractions on paper. They were done about fifty years ago. Through Thursday, Jan. 30. (Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.) . . . ¶ Artists' Choice, 394 West Broadway, has a retrospective of sculptures and works on paper by Mr. Kadish. Through Feb. 22. (Open Sundays.)

Stephanie Kirschen-Cole—Mixed-medium collages using handmade paper. Through Friday, Jan. 31. (De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St.)

Craig Langager—Animal sculptures, mostly, including a life-size red-striped zebra. Through Saturday, Jan. 25. (Siegel, 24 W. 57th St.)

Michael Loew (1907-85)—A memorial exhibition of abstract paintings and figurative collages. Through Feb. 5. (Pearl, 38 E. 57th St.)

Andrew Lord—Primarily black earthenware pitchers and other vessels. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St.)

Jules Olitski / Hans Hofmann (1880-1966)—New paintings. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. / Crayon-and-ink works from the early forties. Through Feb. 8. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

Harvey Quaytman—A cross occurs in all but one of these new geometrical abstract paintings. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (McKee, 41 E. 57th St.)

Robert Ryman—New paintings, including two large works on sheets of fibre glass and a triptych of the same material. Through Feb. 15. (Galerie Maeght Lelong, 20 W. 57th St.)

Donald Shambroom—Paintings of steam shovels and backhoes digging away in the bowels of the city while new construction is going up. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (Markel, 50 W. 57th St.)

Linda Sokolowski—Paintings, drawings, and monotypes. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

William Wegman / Arch Connelly—A first show of paintings by this well-known photographer. / Paintings and sculptures. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (Holly Solomon, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.) . . . ¶ Daniel Wolf, 30 W. 57th St., has mounted vintage black-and-white photographs by Mr. Wegman, which the artist has recently furnished with paint, text, and collage. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (Open Mondays.) . . . ¶ *More of Mr. Connelly's work is at Cowles, 420 West Broadway. Through Saturday, Jan. 25.*

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Group Shows—At the **deutsch**, 20 W. 57th St.: Collages and constructions taking their cue from Cubism. Among the artists are Archipenko, Dove, and Cornell. Through Wednesday, Jan. 29. . . . **dintenfass**, 50 W. 57th St.: Robert Gwathmey, Philip Evergood, and William King are three of the fifteen artists represented in this show marking the gallery's twenty-fifth anniversary. Through Thursday, Jan. 30. . . . **french**, 41 W. 57th St.: Still-life is given the broadest possible definition in this exhibit, which has paintings by contemporary artists Komar & Melamid, Richard Piccolo, Jeanne Duval, and others. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (Open Mondays.) . . . **marian goodman**, 24 W. 57th St.: Drawings by seven influential European artists, among them Broodthaers and Kiefer. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (Open Mondays.) . . . **janis**, 110 W. 57th St.: Early-twentieth-century works—paintings (by Picasso, Braque, Gris, and others), sculptures (by Arp, Ernst, and others), and two Mondrian drawings. Through Saturday, Jan. 25. . . . **tilton**, 24 W. 57th St.: *"The Inspiration Comes from Nature"*: paintings, drawings, and a single sculpture. The artists include Jasper Johns, Joan Mitchell, Mario Merz, and Paolo Icaro. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. . . . **wunderlich**, 41 E. 57th St.: Works by realist artists unfamiliar on the local scene, among them a first-rate pencil drawing of lobster-pot floats by Richard Davis; watercolors of rocks and fruits by Alan Magee; and a painting of the view from his own porch in a Boston suburb by David Campbell, a retired carpenter. Through Feb. 15.

GALLERIES—SoHo

Ida Applebroog—New paintings expressing the artist's concerns about terrorism, sexism, racism, romance, and art. Through Feb. 15. (Feldman, 31 Mercer St.)

Bill Beckley—Photographs with texts, drawings, and paintings, all completed between 1970 and the present. Through Wednesday, Jan. 29. (Gibson, 568 Broadway.)

Peter Bömmels—Humanoids and mutations occupy the bizarre canvases of this German painter, and there are sculptures in the same vein, plus a prickly installation of nine-foot tree branches projecting like spears from a wall. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway.)

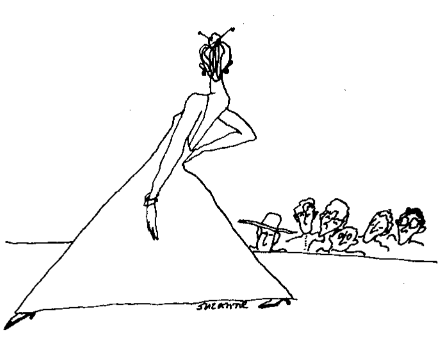
Hanne Darboven—A new work by this Conceptualist which is made up of fifty-four identically framed collages, each one containing a photograph of Hamburg, a postcard of New York, and some handwritten notes about connections between the new world and the old. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (Castelli, 142 Greene St.)

Laddie John Dill / Arch Connelly—Hand-painted cast-paper wall works. / Decorative freestanding and wall pieces bubbling with beads and imitation jewels. Through Saturday, Jan. 25. (Cowles, 420 West Broadway.)

Hermine Ford—Abstract oil paintings and works on paper. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (Toll, 146 Greene St.)

Leon Golub—Portraits of South African blacks are among these large new paintings documenting police brutality. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (Gladstone, 99 Greene St.)

David Hacker—Painted-metal sculptures. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (Plumb, 81 Greene St.)



J. M. Haessle—Colorful, energetic abstractions. Through Feb. 2. (Littlejohn-Smith, 133 Greene St. Opens at 1 on Sundays.)

Grace Hartigan—A series of freehand paintings that offer a fresh and not very reverent survey of Renaissance art—an Infanta, Henry VIII, Lucrezia Borgia, St. George, and so on. Through Wednesday, Jan. 29. (Gruenebaum, 415 West Broadway.)

Douglas Huebler—Paintings by a well-known conceptual artist, including one of Manet's paintings of the Rouen cathedral. Texts accompany the works. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (Castelli, 420 West Broadway.)

Jörg Immendorff—Outsize paintings filled with political symbols, inside jokes about the art world, and colorful grotesqueries by a German artist. Through Saturday, Jan. 25. (Boone, 417 West Broadway.)

Eve Ingalls—Large paintings of Western wilderness terrain under snow. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (SoHo 20, at 469 Broome St. Opens at noon.)

Jack Lembeck—A retrospective of paintings, some on view for the first time. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (Meisel, 141 Prince St.)

Allan McCollum—Fuzzy black-and-white images enlarged from snapshots of art works seen in the backgrounds of TV settings. Through Feb. 8. (Brown, 100 Greene St.)

Helmut Middendorf—Recent figurative paintings. Through Feb. 6. (Nosei, 100 Prince St.)

Richard Mock / Andrew Menard—New abstract paintings. / Styrofoam sculptures of monochromatic figures in unlikely positions, some parallel to the floor. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (Alexander, 59 Wooster St.) . . . ¶ Mr. Mock has a second show of paintings at Exit Art, 578 Broadway. (Opens at noon.)

Gerald Nichols—Large relief constructions based on other art works—Winslow Homer's painting, "Right and Left," of two ducks being shot down, for instance. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (Steinbaum, 132 Greene St.)

Ed Paschke—New paintings of faces and heads distorted by horizontal lines of color cutting across the canvas. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (Kind, 136 Greene St.)

Miklos Pogany—Collages and monotypes. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (Munroe, 415 West Broadway.)

Jean-Pierre Raynaud—An installation of paintings and sculptures. Through Feb. 22. (Carpenter+Hochman, 420 West Broadway.)

Arsen Roje / Thomas Bacher—Paintings of memorable movie scenes—Bogey and Bergman in "Casablanca," and Gable and M.M. in "The Misfits," for instance. / Paintings of Times Square which glow in the dark. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (O. K. Harris, 383 West Broadway.)

Alison Saar—Among the richly varied "new icons" in this show is a life-size sculpture of Sweet Daddy Good Life, whose suit is made of tin from a ceiling, whose palms are gold leaf, and who stands in front of a painting of money falling from the sky like manna. Through Tuesday, Jan. 28. (Knowlton, 153 Mercer St.)

Alan Shields—A skeletal sphere, nearly eleven feet in diameter and made of aluminum tubing, canvas, and acrylic, hangs from the ceiling over colorful sewn-canvas works. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

Michael Singer—Wood-and-stone sculptures, plus related drawings. Through Saturday, Jan. 25. (Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St.)

Joe Stefanelli—Recent paintings and drawings by a veteran abstractionist. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (Ingber, 415 West Broadway.)

Krzysztof Wodiczko and Jana Sterbak—Two installations. Mr. Wodiczko has moved his slide projections indoors to the walls of the 49th Parallel gallery—images of homeless people are projected over images of monuments in Union Square. Miss Sterbak projects text above an illuminated wire sculpture of a headless figure. Through Feb. 15. (49th Parallel, 420 West Broadway.)

Philip Wofford—Large abstract paintings.

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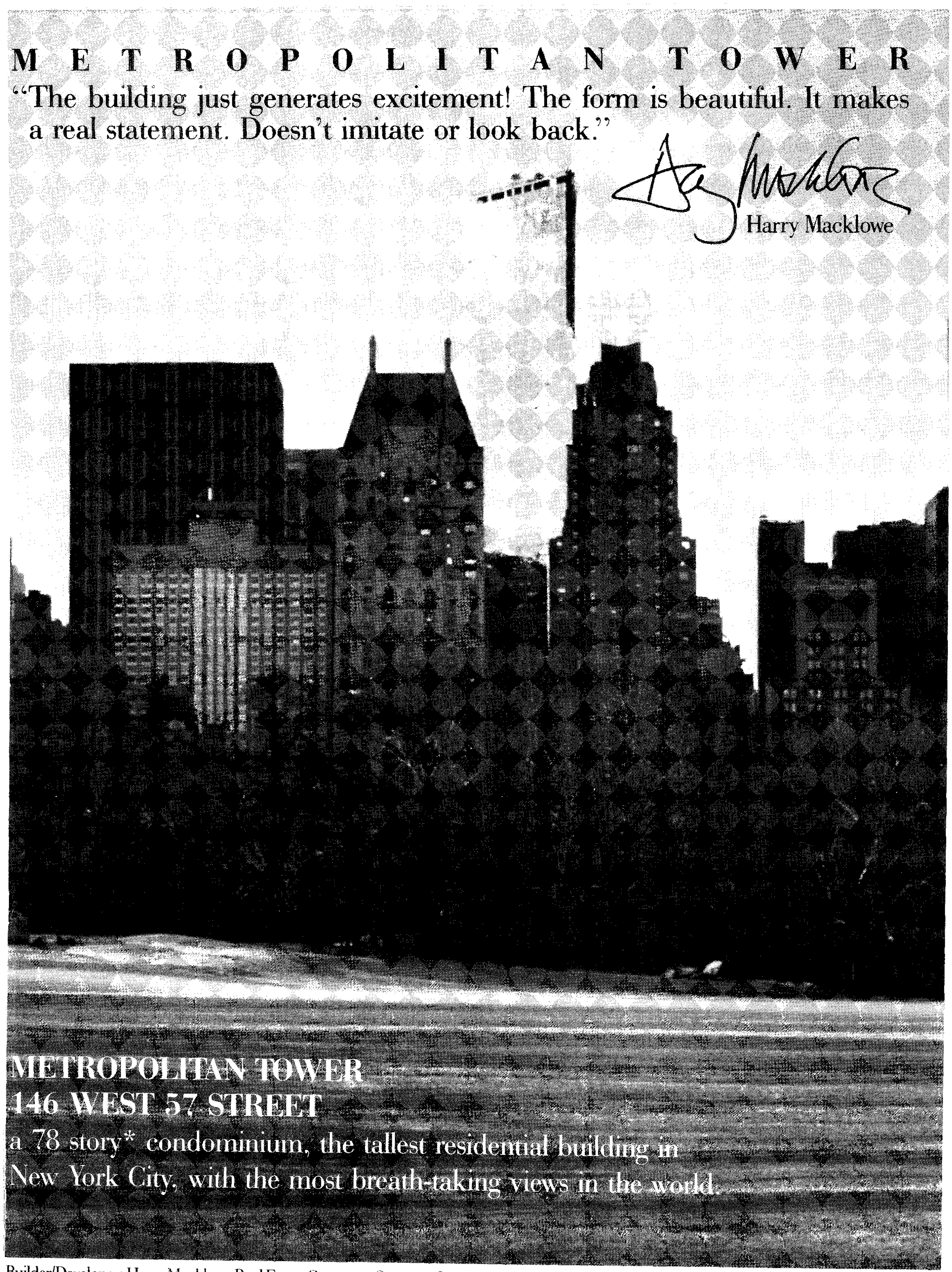

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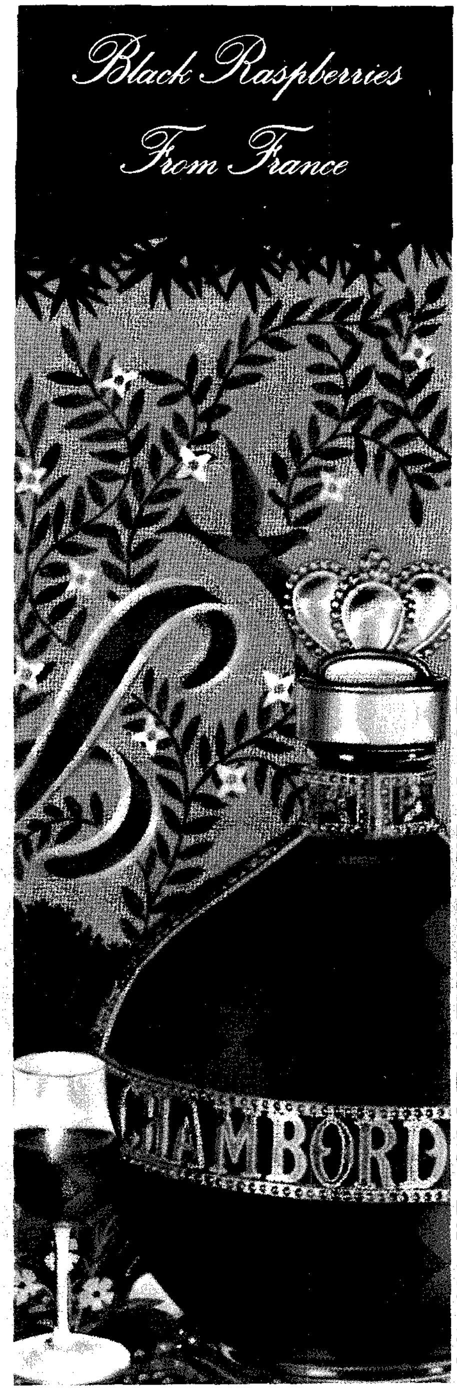

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Through Feb. 5. (Hoffman, 429 West Broadway.)

GROUP SHOWS—At the **PAM ADLER,** 578 Broadway: Abstract works by three painters, Sharon Gold, Judith Murray, and Lynn Umlauf. Through Feb. 22. . . . **A.I.R.,** 63 Crosby St.: Sculptures and paintings by Amara Geffen, Ursula Kavanagh, Carol Kumata, Kathleen Schneider, and Jean Kondo Weigl. Through Saturday, Jan. 25. . . . **CUTLER,** 164 Mercer St.: Paintings by Steven Norton and Adam Cvijanovic; wall pieces of beeswax, lead, tar, and oil paint by Joseph Amar; and other works. Through Feb. 8. . . . **THE DRAWING CENTER,** 137 Greene St.: Eleven newcomers showing landscape abstractions, mostly. Through Feb. 15. (Open Wednesday evenings until 8.) . . . **WEBER,** 142 Greene St.: Works by a dozen artists from other galleries, Lauren Ewing, Joel Fisher, and Barbara Kruger among them. Through Feb. 8.

SCULPTURE—Bryan Hunt, Joel Shapiro, and Tom Otterness are among the seven artists exhibiting new works. Through Feb. 8. (Shafrazi, 163 Mercer St.)

OTHER GALLERIES

DIKE BLAIR—Gouache paintings. Through Feb. 2. (Christminster, 336 E. 5th St. Opens at 1 Wednesdays through Sundays.)

LORENZO BONECHI—Three large paintings, including a Crucifix, by a young Italian. The figures are quite attenuated. Through Feb. 2. (Sharpe, 175 Avenue B, at 11th St. Opens daily, except Mondays, at 1.)

COLETTE—Paintings, sculptures, and photographs, new work and old. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (Newburg, 44 White St. Opens at 1 Wednesdays through Saturdays.)

DALE FRANK—Abstract paintings evoking waterfalls and marshlands by an Australian artist whose studio in Milan was recently flooded in a plumbing mishap. Through Feb. 9. (Audiello, 436 E. 11th St., near Avenue A. Opens at 1 Wednesdays through Sundays.)

DENISE GREEN—A two-gallery exhibit of paintings. New works. Through Feb. 2. (M-13, at 413 E. 9th St. Opens at 1 Wednesdays through Sundays.) . . . ¶ Paintings dating from 1976 to 1985, and drawings. Through Feb. 12. (Viafora, 568 Broadway.)

BETSY KAUFMAN—Large-scale acrylic paintings. Through Feb. 9. (Wolff, 513 E. 6th St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

MEREDITH LUND—New paintings crowded with images and incidents. Through Feb. 2. (Avenue B Gallery, 167 Avenue B, at 11th St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

PHILIP TAAFFE—Large paintings. Through Feb. 2. (Hearn, 735 E. 9th St., just west of Avenue D. Opens at 1 Wednesdays through Sundays.)

GROUP SHOWS—At the **BROMM,** 170 Avenue A, at 11th St.: Rosemarie Castoro, Jody Pinto, and Krzysztof Wodiczko are three of the ten artists included. Through Feb. 9. (Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.) . . . **SEMAPHORE EAST,** 157 Avenue B, at 10th St.: John Bowman, Martin Wong, and Ellen Berkenblit are among the artists represented. Through Feb. 2. (Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

CHUCK CLOSE / EMMET GOWIN—Photographic studies for some of his large-scale paintings. / New photographs of Mt. St. Helens and the ancient city of Petra, in Jordan. Through Feb. 15. (Pace-MacGill, 11 E. 57th St.)

PETER HUJAR—Photographs of people, animals, and places, many of the latter in urban slums. Through Sunday, Jan. 26. (Gracie Mansion Gallery, 167 Avenue A, at 10th St. Opens at 1 Wednesdays through Sundays.) . . . ¶ Also showing are collages and constructions by Al Hansen, one using cigarette butts and paper matches, and ninety-eight papier-mâché masks by Lisa Cieslik.

ANDRÉ KERTÉSZ (1894-1985)—Approximately a hundred and sixty prints of Paris and New York are on view at the Metropolitan Museum. See below, under "Museums," for dates and times.

FRANK MAJORE—A three-gallery exhibit of prints. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Through Feb. 16. Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6. . . . ¶ 303 Gallery, 303 Park Ave. S., at 23rd St. Through Feb. 8. Opens at 1. . . . ¶ Nature Morte, 204 E. 10th St. Through Sunday, Jan. 26. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

JOHN REUTER AND STEPHEN JOHN PHILLIPS—Photographs of nudes. Through Feb. 7. (Pfeifer, 568 Broadway.)

AUGUST SANDER (1876-1964) / **PETER ARCHER**—Photographs, chiefly landscapes and architecture. / Landscape drawings in charcoal. Through Saturday, Feb. 1. (Sander, 51 Greene St.)

KENNETH SNELSON—Panoramic photographs of Paris. Through Feb. 15. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)

TRENDS IN SPANISH PHOTOGRAPHY—About a hundred and fifty prints by nearly two dozen artists in a show that comprehends avant-garde experiments, photojournalism, and advertising—the varied complexion of photography in Spain during the period from 1920 to 1945. Through Feb. 16. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.) . . . ¶ Forty prints by nine Spanish Pictorialists who worked in the first four decades of this century. Through Feb. 28. (Spanish Institute, 684 Park Ave., at 68th St. Open Mondays; closed Saturdays.)

GROUP SHOW—A small offering of photograms, photomontages, and manipulated prints from the twenties and thirties by Moholy-Nagy, Uelsmann, Florence Henri, and others. Through March 8. (Prakapas, 19 E. 71st St. Opens at noon.)

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—A gilded French rococo carriage, decorated with paintings from the studio of Boucher, and Rubens' monumental painting "The Assumption of the Virgin" set the tone of an elaborate show of art works acquired or commissioned by the Princes of Liechtenstein between the sixteenth century and the nineteenth. Ornate firearms in the collection occupy one gallery. . . . ¶ "Costumes of Royal India," an extravaganza evoking palaces of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when the garments on view were worn by rajas, maharajas, ranis, maharanis, nizams, and nawabs. Also, accessories, furnishings, and portraits. . . . **PHOTOGRAPHY:** Prints by André Kertész. Through Feb. 23. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.—An exhibit of lithographs and posters, mainly, by Toulouse-Lautrec, all from his last ten years. Through Sunday, Jan. 26. . . . **PHOTOGRAPHY:** "Variants," a selection of black-and-white prints by Americans and Europeans. Through March 11. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—A show of about a hundred and twenty sculptures representing the different styles used by American and European artists since the forties, and singling out the contributions of Giacometti, David Smith, and Cornell. Through Feb. 16. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 11 to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—An exhibit that examines American decorative and industrial design in this century, with examples extending from a Frank Lloyd Wright dining set to an Apple IIc personal computer. Through Feb. 16. . . . ¶ A Ralston Crawford (1906-78) retrospective of paintings, drawings, photographs, and lithographs. Through Feb. 2. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM, Eastern Parkway—The Festival of India has brought a comprehensive survey of terra-cotta objects, one of whose characteristics is that they bear a striking family resemblance to one another, whether they were produced in 2500 B.C. or in the twentieth century. The more than a hundred and thirty pieces include cult figurines, animals, and toys. (Open daily except Tuesdays. Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 11 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—Seventy-six paintings by American artists who have recorded the American West, to celebrate either its history or its natural beauty. George Catlin, Charles Russell, Georgia O'Keeffe, Chuck Forsman, and others. Through Feb. 16. (Open daily. Hours: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—The Festival of India has transformed the museum into a bazaarlike exhibition space filled with goods made by Indian artisans to the specifications of American and European designers—Mario Bellini's marble base for upholstery and Mary McFadden's adaptations of traditional Indian costumes and jewelry, for example. Through Feb. 23. . . . ¶ An exhibit of drawings for furniture, lamps, etc., by members of the Milan-based design group Memphis, along with examples of the designs—a Michele De Lucchi sofa that rests on metal poles attached to suction cups, among them. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St.—A show concerning the Ingres portrait of Comtesse d'Haussonville painted between 1842 and 1845. With the work as its focal point, the exhibit examines and documents everything from the porcelains seen in the portrait to memorabilia of the Comtesse to the artist's preparatory studies. Through Feb. 16. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—An exhibit of paintings, drawings, and sculptures by the community of immigrant Jewish artists who moved to the Montparnasse section of Paris in the first half of this century. Chagall, Modigliani, Zadkine, and Sonia Delaunay are among them. Through Feb. 2. (Open daily except Fridays and Saturdays. Hours: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, noon to 5; Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—"The Golden Age of British Photography, 1839-1900," an exhibit of more than two hundred photographs from the Victoria & Albert Museum. Through Feb. 2. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Museum of the City of New York, Fifth Ave. at 104th St.—"Stuart Davis's New York," an exhibit of paintings (including a mural), drawings, and prints centered on Manhattan's landscape, which inspired so many of his works. Through March 16. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

National Academy of Design, 1083 Fifth Ave., at 89th St.—A show of thirty-seven Old Master paintings on loan from London's Dulwich Picture Gallery. Rembrandt's "Girl Leaning on a Stone Pedestal" and Poussin's "The Triumph of David" are among them. Through Feb. 16. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—A display of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century depictions of Niagara Falls when it was a mecca for artists as well as tourists. Among the painters galvanized by the spectacle were Church, Hicks, Bierstadt, Cole, and Twachtman. Paintings, drawings, photographs, and memorabilia. (Open daily except Mondays. Hours: Tuesdays through Fridays, 11 to 5; Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

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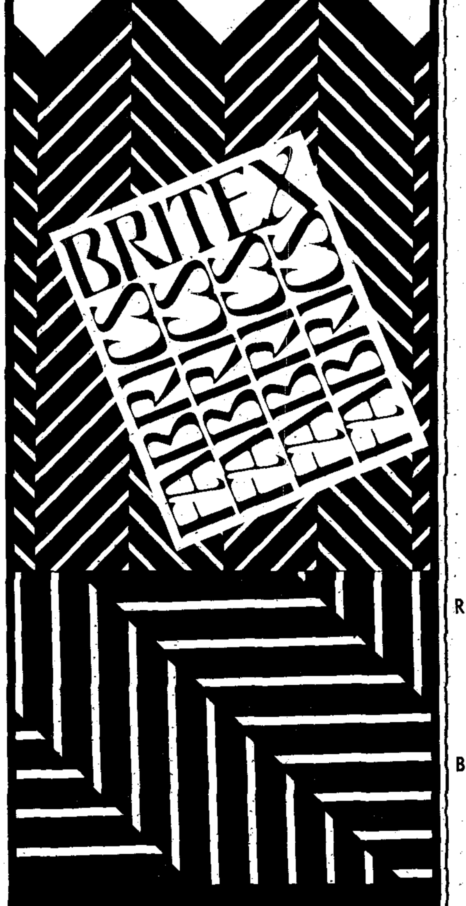

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Debra Wanner (performance), Thursday through Saturday, Jan. 23-25, at 8:30; Richard Layzell (performance), Thursday, Jan. 30, at 8:30.

The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793—Music performance: Malcolm Goldstein and Archie Shepp, Friday, Jan. 24, at 8; Metropolitan Blues All-Stars and Olu Dara and the Okra Orchestra, Saturday, Jan. 25, at 8: Zeitgeist and Leroy Jenkins and Sting, Sunday, Jan. 26, at 3; Shelly Hirsch and Tazartes Ghedahlia, Wednesday, Jan. 29, at 8; Hugo Largo and Holger Hiller & Group, Thursday, Jan. 30, at 8; Harry De Wit and Holger Hiller & Group, Friday, Jan. 31, at 8; Black Rock Coalition Big Band, Saturday, Feb. 1, at 8.

P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288—Jim Neu and David Woodberry (dance performance), Friday through Sunday, Jan. 24-26, at 9; Channel Z (dance), Friday through Sunday, Jan. 31-Feb. 2, at 9.

MUSIC

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Alice Tully Hall 362-1911; for Avery Fisher Hall 874-2424; for Carnegie Hall 247-7800; for Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium, Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St., 570-3949; for Kaufmann Concert Hall, 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St., 427-4410; for Merkin Concert Hall, Abraham Goodman House, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719; and for Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St., 864-5400. Other box-office numbers are incuded in the listings.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—Wednesday, Jan. 22, at 8: "Tosca," with Montserrat Caballé, Luciano Pavarotti, and Cornell MacNeil; conducted by Carlo Felice Cillario. . . . ¶ Thursday, Jan. 23, at 8: "Idomeneo," with Linda Zoghby, Carol Vaness, Frederica von Stade, David Rendall, and John Alexander; Jeffrey Tate. . . . ¶ Friday, Jan. 24, at 8: "Khovanshchina," with Natalia Rom, Helga Dernesch, Aage Haugland, and Martti Talvela; Neeme Järvi. . . . ¶ Saturday, Jan. 25, at 1:30: "Roméo et Juliette," with Catherine Malfitano, Hilda Harris, Neil Shicoff, and Brian Schexnayder; Sylvain Cambreling. . . . ¶ Saturday, Jan. 25, at 8: "Tosca," with Montserrat Caballé, Luciano Pavarotti, and Cornell MacNeil; Carlo Felice Cillario. . . . ¶ Monday, Jan. 27, at 8: "Khovanshchina," with Natalia Rom, Stefka Mineva, Aage Haugland, and Martti Talvela; Neeme Järvi. . . . ¶ Tuesday, Jan. 28, at 8: "Roméo et Juliette," with Catherine Malfitano, Hilda Harris, Neil Shicoff, and Brian Schexnayder; Sylvain Cambreling. . . . ¶ Wednesday, Jan. 29, at 8: "Idomeneo," with Linda Zoghby, Carol Vaness, Frederica von Stade, William Lewis, and John Alexander; Jeffrey Tate. . . . ¶ Thursday, Jan. 30, at 8: "Porgy and Bess," with Priscilla Baskerville, Gwendolyn Bradley, Veronica Tyler, Charles Williams, and Michael Smartt; James Levine. . . . ¶ Friday, Jan. 31, at 8: "Roméo et Juliette," with Catherine Malfitano, Hilda Harris, Neil Shicoff, and Vernon Hartman; Sylvain Cambreling. . . . ¶ Saturday, Feb. 1, at 1:30: "Khovanshchina," with Natalia Rom, Helga Dernesch, Aage Haugland, and Martti Talvela; Neeme Järvi. . . . ¶ Saturday, Feb. 1, at 8: "Idomeneo," with Linda Zoghby, Carol Vaness, Frederica von Stade, David Rendall, and John Alexander; Jeffrey Tate.

Richard Strauss Opera Festival—Jeffrey Tate conducting the Orchestra of St. Luke's in a semi-staged performance of "Capriccio," with Felicity Lott and Evelyn Lear, sopranos; Jerry Hadley, tenor; and Thomas Stewart, baritone. John Cox is the director of the first in a series of three operas. (Carnegie Hall. Tuesday, Jan. 28, at 7:30.)

Bel Canto Opera—Johannes Somary conducting the first of three performances of a Massenet double bill: "Thérèse" and "Le Portrait de Manon." Staged by Cynthia Edwards. (Joan of Arc Junior High School, 154 W. 93rd St. Saturday, Feb. 1, at 8. For information about tickets, call 279-4200.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall, Erich Leinsdorf conducting—Thursday, Jan. 23, at 8; Friday, Jan. 24, at 2; and Tuesday, Jan. 28, at 7:30: A Schoenberg-Stravinsky-Dvořák program (all with Walter Klien, piano). . . . ¶ Thursday through Saturday, Jan. 30-Feb. 1, and Tuesday, Feb. 4, at 8: A Brahms-Martinu-Stravinsky-Berlioz program (*no soloists*).

Cracow Philharmonic—Krzysztof Penderecki directing the New York première of his "Polish Requiem," with Mariana Nicolesco, soprano; Jadwiga Rappe, alto; Henryk Grychnik, tenor; Malcolm Smith, bass-baritone; and the Choral Arts Society of Washington. (Carnegie Hall. Saturday, Jan. 25, at 8.)

Philharmonia Hungarica—André Bernard conducting and acting as trumpet soloist for a Haydn-Schubert-Bartók program. (Carnegie Hall. Thursday, Jan. 30, at 8.)

Brooklyn Philharmonic—Lukas Foss directing the first in a "Meet the Moderns" series of four programs, this one with Michael Barrett piano; David Jaffe, mandolin; and the Long Island Symphonic Choral Association. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St Friday, Jan. 24, at 8. For information about tickets, call 254-6374. . . . ¶ Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. Saturday, Jan. 25, at 8.)

Orchestra of St. Luke's—Leon Fleisher conducting, with Mieczyslaw Horszowski, piano (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium. Friday Jan. 31, at 8.)

Y Chamber Symphony—Gerard Schwarz directing a program of baroque music, with Michala Petri, recorder, and the Y Chorale (Kaufmann Concert Hall. Saturday, Feb. 1 at 8.)

St. Thomas Choir—Gerre Hancock directing and playing the organ for an all-Britten program. (St. Thomas Church, Fifth Ave. at 53rd St. Tuesday, Jan. 28, at 7:30. Admission by contribution.)

New Calliope Singers and Christine Schadeberg—Peter Schubert directing the choral group and soprano in a program of new music (McMillin Theatre, Broadway at 116th St Friday, Jan. 31, at 8. No tickets necessary.)

RECITALS

Pomerium Musices—Alexander Blachley conducting, with Julianne Baird, Ann Monoyios and Johanna Arnold, all sopranos; Drew Minter, countertenor; and others. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Thursday, Jan. 23, at 8.)

Classical Quartet—The first of two Haydn-Mozart programs. (St. Michael's Church Amsterdam Ave. at 99th St. Thursday, Jan 23, at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

New Music Consort—With Jan Opalach, bass and Ursula Oppens and Martin Goldray piano. (Borden Auditorium, Manhattan School of Music, 120 Claremont Ave., at 122nd St Thursday, Jan. 23, at 8. For information about tickets, call 749-2802, Ext. 520.)

Paul Esswood—Countertenor, with John Constable, harpsichord. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium. Friday, Jan. 24, at 8.)

Louis Bagger—Harpsichord, in a program of Scarlatti sonatas. (Hubbard Recital Hall Manhattan School of Music, 120 Claremont Ave. at 122nd St. Friday, Jan. 24, at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center—Todd Phillips, violin; Scott Nickrenz, viola; Lynn Harrell, cello; and members of the Society (Paula Cooper Gallery, 155 Wooster St. Saturday, Jan. 25, at 6. No seats—just cushions on the floor. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.) . . . ¶ The same program (Alice Tully Hall. Sunday, Jan. 26, at 5, and Monday and Tuesday, Jan. 27-28, at 7:30.)

Shlomo Mintz—Violin, in an all-Schubert program, with Paul Ostrovsky, piano. (Kaufmann Concert Hall. Saturday, Jan. 25, at 8.)

Ensemble for Early Music—A program of medieval music. (Alice Tully Hall. Saturday, Jan 25, at 8.)

Yale Chamber Music Series—The second in a series of four concerts performed by various members of the faculty of the Yale University School of Music. (Merkin Concert Hall Saturday, Jan. 25, at 8.)

Lyra—A program called "The Viola da Gamba in the Twentieth Century." With guest artists. (St. Michael's Church, Amsterdam Ave. at 99th St. Saturday, Jan. 25, at 8. For information about tickets, call 222-2700.)

Hudson Valley Philharmonic Principal Players—Chamber music. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Sunday, Jan. 26, at 2.)

Canadian Brass—The third in a series of four programs, this one with guest artists from the New York Philharmonic and from Japan. (Carnegie Hall. Sunday, Jan. 26, at 2:30.)

Susan Gregory—Soprano. (Third Street Music School Settlement, 235 E. 11th St. Sunday, Jan. 26, at 3. For tickets, call 777-3240.)

Chester String Quartet—The second in a series of three concerts. (Merkin Concert Hall. Sunday, Jan. 26, at 3.)

Sarah Grunstein—Piano, in the second of two concerts presenting Bach's "The Well-Tempered Clavier." (Merkin Concert Hall. Sunday, Jan. 26, at 7:30.)

Robert Goldsand—Piano. (Hubbard Recital Hall, Manhattan School of Music, 120 Claremont Ave., at 122nd St. Monday, Jan. 27, at 8. No tickets necessary.)

League-ISCM—The chamber players of the League, with Jennifer Graham, oboe, and James Baker, Eric Brewster, and Han Hagiwara, all percussion. (Symphony Space. Monday, Jan. 27, at 8.)

John Graham—Viola. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Tuesday, Jan. 28, at 8.)

Constance Cooper and Walter Hilse—Soprano and piano, in a program of contemporary music, with assisting artists. (Christ and St. Stephen's Church, 120 W. 69th St. Tuesday, Jan. 28, at 8. For information about tickets, call 924-0110.)

Musica Camerit—The second in a series of three programs, this one with Steven Lubin, keyboard, and Eun-Sun Lee, violin. (Merkin Concert Hall. Tuesday, Jan. 28, at 8.)

Musicians' Accord—With Robert Black, guest conductor, and Constantine Cassolas, tenor. (Symphony Space. Tuesday, Jan. 28, at 8.)

New York Trio—A newly formed ensemble—Paul Ostrovsky, piano; Liba Schacht, violin; and Charles Curtis, cello. (Kaufmann Concert Hall. Tuesday, Jan. 28, at 8.)

Rudolf Serkin—Piano. (Carnegie Hall. Wednesday, Jan. 29, at 8.)

Group for Contemporary Music—A program that includes works by Otto Luening, in honor of the composer's eighty-fifth birthday. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Wednesday, Jan. 29, at 8.)

Fine Arts Quartet—With Shlomo Mintz, viola. (Kaufmann Concert Hall. Wednesday, Jan. 29, at 8.)

Fredell Lack—Violin, in a recital postponed from Nov. 9. (Merkin Concert Hall. Thursday, Jan. 30, at 8.)

Jeffrey Solow and Doris Stevenson—Cello and piano. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Thursday, Jan. 30, at 8.)

Da Capo Chamber Players—With Daniel Druckman, percussion. (Carnegie Recital Hall. Friday, Jan. 31, at 8.)

Schubert Birthday Celebration—A program of chamber music, lieder, and choral music by the composer, performed by, among others, Dawn Upshaw, soprano; Robert Merfeld, piano; and the women of the New Amsterdam Singers. (Symphony Space. Friday, Jan. 31, at 8.)

Emerson String Quartet—The last in a series of Haydn-Mozart-Schubert programs. (Grace Rainey Rogers Auditorium. Saturday, Feb. 1, at 8.)

Music from Japan—Saturday, Feb. 1, at 8: Five American premières, performed by the Japan Chamber Ensemble. . . . ¶ Sunday, Feb. 2, at 5: A program of works for traditional Japanese instruments. (Asia Society, 725 Park Ave., at 70th St. For tickets, call 288-6400, Ext. 276.)

Chamber Music at BAM—Yefim Bronfman, piano; Joseph Swensen, violin; Scott Nickrenz, viola; and Laurence Lesser, cello. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. Saturday, Feb. 1, at 8:30, and Sunday, Feb. 2, at 2.)

Note—Csaba Onczay, cello, and Marta Gulyas, piano, will give a recital at the Frick Collection (1 E. 70th St.) on Sunday, Feb. 9, at 5. Free tickets, limited to two per applicant, will be issued starting Monday, Jan. 27, in the order that written applications are received on that day (not before). A self-addressed envelope should be enclosed.

SPORTS

(The box-office number for Madison Square Garden is 564-4400.)

Professional Basketball—At **madison square garden:** Knicks vs. Milwaukee, Saturday, Jan. 25, at 7:30. . . . ¶ Knicks vs. Chicago, Tuesday, Jan. 28, at 7:30. . . . **byrne meadowlands arena** (1-201 935-8888): Nets vs. Seattle, Thursday, Jan. 30, at 7:30. . . . ¶ Nets vs. Atlanta, Saturday, Feb. 1, at 7:30.

Hockey—At **madison square garden:** Rangers vs. Quebec Nordiques, Thursday, Jan. 23, at 7:35. . . . **nassau coliseum:** Islanders vs. Chicago Black Hawks, Saturday, Jan. 25, at 7:05. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Toronto Maple Leafs, Tuesday, Jan. 28, at 8:05. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Philadelphia Flyers, Thursday, Jan. 30, at 8:05. . . . ¶ Islanders vs. Pittsburgh Penguins, Saturday, Feb. 1, at 5:05. (Hempstead Turnpike, Uniondale, L.I. 1-516 794-9100.) . . . **byrne meadowlands arena** (1-201 935-3900): Devils vs. Pittsburgh Penguins, Wednesday, Jan. 29, at 7:35.

Racing—At Aqueduct: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 12:30. The Assault Handicap, Saturday, Jan. 25.

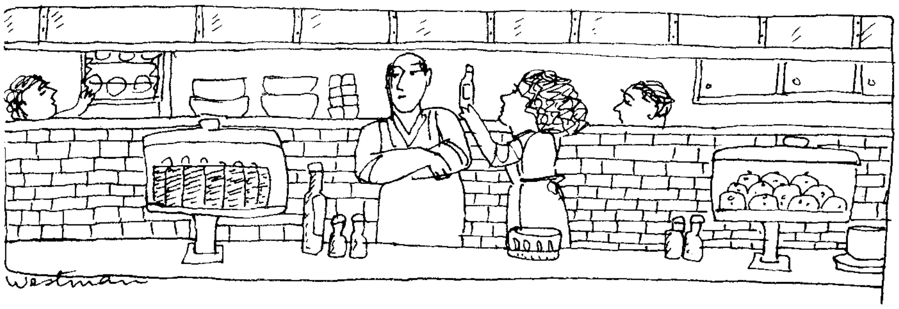
ET ALIA

Poetry and Prose Readings—Vicki Hearne and James Tate reading from their own poetry. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 427-4410. Monday, Jan. 27, at 8:15.) . . . ¶ Tony Randall, David Margulies, Brenda Currin, and Barbara Barrie reading from the short stories of Tolstoy, Delmore Schwartz, Eudora Welty, and John Cheever. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Wednesday, Jan. 29, at 6:30.)

Winter Antiques Show—The thirty-second annual show, featuring American and European furniture, paintings, silver, porcelain, and the like, assembled by about seventy-five dealers. In addition, there will be a loan exhibit of nineteenth-century American toys from the New-York Historical Society, the Shelburne Museum, and from private collections. A benefit for the East Side House Settlement. (7th Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 66th St. Saturday, Jan. 25, through Sunday, Feb. 2. Weekdays, 11 to 9; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Cat Show—International Cat Show, presented by the Garden Cat Club. (Madison Square Garden. 564-4400. Friday, Jan. 24, from 2 to 9, and Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 25-26, from 10 to 7.)

Auctions—At Sotheby's, York Ave. at 72nd St. (Exhibition hours: Tuesdays through Saturdays, 9:30 to 5; Sunday, Jan. 26, from 1 to 5.)—Saturday, Jan. 25, at 10:15: English furniture, decorations, and carpets. . . . ¶ Saturday, Jan. 25, at 2: English furniture, from the Jerome C. Neuhoff collection. . . . ¶ Tuesday, Jan. 28, at 2: Dutch delft, from the collection of Dr. Jan Boyazoglu.



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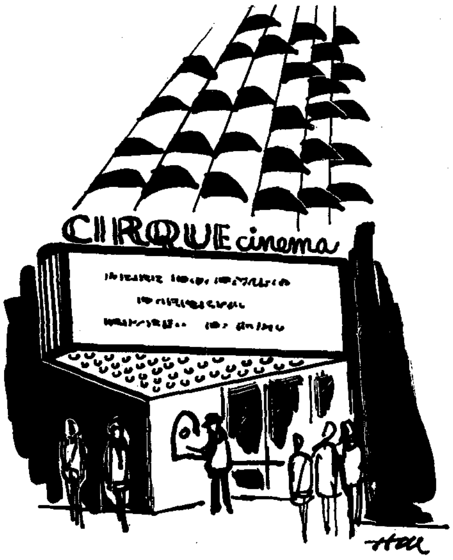
GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES



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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 18.

EAST SIDE

Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171; theatre opens in the late afternoon and is closed Mondays.)
Through Jan. 30: "Je Tu Il Elle" (1974; directed by Chantal Akerman; in French).
From Jan. 31: "Edith's Diary" (1984; Hans W. Geissendorfer; in German).

New Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"The Jewel of the Nile" (Lewis Teague), with Michael Douglas, Kathleen Turner, and Danny DeVito.

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Murphy's Romance" (Martin Ritt), with Sally Field and James Garner.

Murray Hill, 160 E. 34th. (685-7652)
Through Jan. 23: "Black Moon Rising" (Harley Cokliss), with Tommy Lee Jones.
From Jan. 24: "My Chauffeur" (David Beaird), with Deborah Foreman and Sam Jones.

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Brazil" (Terry Gilliam), with Jonathan Pryce.
Theatre 2: "A Chorus Line" (Richard Attenborough).
Theatre 3: "Young Sherlock Holmes" (†).

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
Through Jan. 30: "White Nights" (†).
From Jan. 31: "Down and Out in Beverly Hills" (Paul Mazursky), with Nick Nolte, Bette Midler, and Richard Dreyfuss.

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
Through Jan. 23: "The Journey of Natty Gann" (Jeremy Kagan), with Meredith Salenger and John Cusack.
From Jan. 24: "My Chauffeur" (David Beaird), with Deborah Foreman and Sam Jones.

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
"The Jewel of the Nile" (Lewis Teague), with Michael Douglas, Kathleen Turner, and Danny DeVito.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Runaway Train" (Andrei Konchalovsky), with Jon Voight, Eric Roberts, and Rebecca DeMornay.

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
Through Jan. 30: "Fool for Love" (†).
From Jan. 31: "Stripper" (Jerome Gary).

Manhattan 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: Through Jan. 23: "Pray for Death" (Gordon Hessler), with Sho Kogusi. From Jan. 24: "Jagged Edge" (†).
Theatre 2: "Black Moon Rising" (Harley Cokliss), with Tommy Lee Jones.

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Murphy's Romance" (Martin Ritt), with Sally Field and James Garner.
Theatre 2: Through Jan. 30: "White Nights" (†). From Jan. 31: "Down and Out in Beverly Hills" (Paul Mazursky), with Nick Nolte, Bette Midler, and Richard Dreyfuss.

D. W. Griffith, 235 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Kiss of the Spider Woman" (†).

Cinema I and II, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022/0774)
Theatre 1: "Ran" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Trip to Bountiful" (†).

Gemini 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Twice in a Lifetime" (†).
Theatre 2: "Iron Eagle" (Sidney J. Furie), with Louis Gossett, Jr., and Jason Gedrick.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"The Color Purple" (†).

Loews New York Twin 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "Brazil" (Terry Gilliam), with Jonathan Pryce.
Theatre 2: "The Clan of the Cave Bear" (Michael Chapman), with Daryl Hannah.

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
Through Jan. 30: "The Gods Must Be Crazy" (1979; Jamie Uys).
From Jan. 31: "The Goodbye People" (Herb Gardner), with Martin Balsam, Judd Hirsch, and Pamela Reed.

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Out of Africa" (†).

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Troll" (John Buechler), with Noah Hathaway.

Loews Orpheum 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: "Rocky IV" (Sylvester Stallone), with Stallone, Talia Shire, Burt Young, and Carl Weathers.
Theatre 2: "Young Sherlock Holmes" (†).

86th St. East, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
"The Jewel of the Nile" (Lewis Teague), with Michael Douglas, Kathleen Turner, and Danny DeVito.

R.K.O. Century 86th St. Twin, Lexington at 86th. (289-8900)
Theatre 1: Through Jan. 23: "Spies Like Us" (John Landis), with Chevy Chase and Dan Aykroyd. From Jan. 24: "Pray for Death" (Gordon Hessler), with Sho Kosugi.
Theatre 2: "Iron Eagle" (Sidney J. Furie), with Louis Gossett, Jr., and Jason Gedrick.

WEST SIDE

Film Forum 1 and 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Theatre 1: Through Jan. 28: "Following the Führer" (directed by Erwin Leiser; in German). From Jan. 29: "A.K." (1985; Chris Marker; in English and Japanese), a documentary about the making of Kurosawa's "Ran;" and "Ulysse" (1983; Agnès Varda; in French).
Theatre 2: Through Jan. 23: "Prizzi's Honor" (†). From Jan. 24: "Return" (Andrew Silver).

Bleecker St. Cinema 1 and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Theatre 1: "Uforia" (1981; John Binder), with Cindy Williams, Harry Dean Stanton, and Fred Ward.
Theatre 2: "28 Up" (1984; Michael Apted), a documentary.

Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: Through Jan. 30: "Runaway Train" (Andrei Konchalovsky), with Jon Voight, Eric Roberts, and Rebecca DeMornay. From Jan. 31: "Power" (Sidney Lumet).
Theatre 2: Through Jan. 23: "Enemy Mine" (Wolfgang Petersen), with Dennis Quaid and Louis Gossett, Jr. Jan. 24-30: "Streetwise" (Martin Bell), a documentary. From Jan. 31: "The Gods Must Be Crazy" (1979; Jamie Uys).

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515; Mondays through Fridays, theatre opens in the late afternoon.)
Through Jan. 30: The New York Gay Film Festival.
From Jan. 31: "Joey."

R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "The Color Purple" (†).
Theatre 2: "Out of Africa" (†).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "When Father Was Away on Business" (Emir Kusturica; in Yugoslav).
Theatre 2: "Kiss of the Spider Woman" (†).
Theatre 3: Through Jan. 23: "Jagged Edge" (†). From Jan. 24: "Fool for Love" (†).
Theatre 4: Through Jan. 30: "Sotto, Sotto" (Lina Wertmüller; in Italian). From Jan. 31: "Sugarbaby" (Percy Adlon; in German).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "The Journey of Natty Gann" (Jeremy Kagan), with Meredith Salenger and John Cusack.
Theatre 2: "Iron Eagle" (Sidney J. Furie), with Louis Gossett, Jr., and Jason Gedrick.
Theatre 3: Through Jan. 23: (Matinées only) "The Adventures of Mark Twain" (Will Vinton); and (evenings only) "Clue" (Jonathan Lynn; ending B). From Jan. 24: "Back to the Future" (†).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"A Chorus Line" (Richard Attenborough).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
Through Jan. 30: "White Nights" (†).
From Jan. 31: "Down and Out in Beverly Hills" (Paul Mazursky), with Nick Nolte, Bette Midler, and Richard Dreyfuss.

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (757-2715)
"Sweet Dreams" (†).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
Through Jan. 23: "Prizzi's Honor" (†).
From Jan. 24: "Always" (Henry Jaglom).

New Carnegie, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
"Murphy's Romance" (Martin Ritt), with Sally Field and James Garner.

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
"The Official Story" (Luis Puenzo; in Spanish), with Norma Aleandro.

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"The Color Purple" (†).

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"A Chorus Line" (Richard Attenborough).

Lincoln Plaza 1, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Sugarbaby" (Percy Adlon; in German).
Theatre 2: "When Father Was Away on Business" (Emir Kusturica; in Yugoslav).
Theatre 3: "Twice in a Lifetime" (†).

Cinema Studio 1 and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: "Shoah" (†). Part I will be shown daily.
Theatre 2: "Shoah" (†). Part II will be shown daily.

Embassy 72nd St. 1 and 2, B'way at 72nd. (724-6745)
Theatre 1: Through Jan. 30: "The Mystery of Alexina" (Rene Feret; in French). From Jan. 31: "White Nights" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Jan. 28: "Those Glory, Glory Days" (Philip Saville). From Jan. 29: "Forever Young" (David Drury).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "Iron Eagle" (Sidney J. Furie), with Louis Gossett, Jr., and Jason Gedrick.
Theatre 2: "Young Sherlock Holmes" (†).
Theatre 3: "Brazil" (Terry Gilliam), with Jonathan Pryce.
Theatre 4: "The Color Purple" (†).
Theatre 5: "Out of Africa" (†).
Theatre 6: "The Jewel of the Nile" (Lewis Teague), with Michael Douglas, Kathleen Turner, and Danny DeVito.

Olympia Quad, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: Through Jan. 23: "The Journey of Natty Gann" (Jeremy Kagan), with Meredith Salenger and John Cusack. Jan. 24-30: "My Chauffeur" (David Beaird), with Deb-

orah Foreman and Sam Jones. From Jan. 31: "White Nights" (†).

Theatre 2: Through Jan. 23: (Matinées only) "The Adventures of Mark Twain" (Will Vinton); and (evenings only) "Black Moon Rising" (Harley Cokliss), with Tommy Lee Jones. From Jan. 24: "Pray for Death" (Gordon Hessler), with Sho Kosugi.

Theatre 3: Through Jan. 30: "Runaway Train" (Andrei Konchalovsky), with Jon Voight, Eric Roberts, and Rebecca DeMornay. From Jan. 31: "Kiss of the Spider Woman" (†).

Theatre 4: "Iron Eagle" (Sidney J. Furie), with Louis Gossett, Jr., and Jason Gedrick.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Theatres, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)

Theatre 1: "The Color Purple" (†).

Theatre 2: Through Jan. 30: "Black Moon Rising" (directed by Harley Cokliss), with Tommy Lee Jones. From Jan. 31: "Power" (Sidney Lumet).

Theatre 3: "Back to the Future" (†).

Theatre 4: Through Jan. 23: "The Annihilators." From Jan. 24: To be announced.

Theatre 5: "Krush Groove" (Michael Schultz).

Theatre 6: (Matinées only) "The Adventures of Mark Twain" (Will Vinton); and (evenings only) "A Nightmare on Elm Street, Part 2: Freddy's Revenge" (Jack Sholder).

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (757-2408)

Through Jan. 30: "The Journey of Natty Gann" (Jeremy Kagan), with Meredith Salenger and John Cusack.

From Jan. 31: "White Nights" (†).

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, B'way at 47th. (730-7262)

Theatre 2: "Runaway Train" (Andrei Konchalovsky), with Jon Voight, Eric Roberts, and Rebecca DeMornay.

Theatre 3: "Clue" (Jonathan Lynn; ending A).

Theatre 4: "Clue" (ending C).

Loews Astor Plaza, B'way at 44th. (869-8340)

"Young Sherlock Holmes" (†).

Loews State 1 and 2, B'way at 45th. (575-5060)

Theatre 1: "Rocky IV" (Sylvester Stallone), with Stallone, Talia Shire, Burt Young, and Carl Weathers.

Theatre 2: "Out of Africa" (†).

Movieland, B'way at 47th. (757-8320)

"Enemy Mine" (Wolfgang Petersen), with Dennis Quaid and Louis Gossett, Jr.

New Embassy 49th Street, Seventh Ave. at 49th. (757-7003)

"101 Dalmatians" (†).

R.K.O. Century National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)

Theatre 1: "Iron Eagle" (Sidney J. Furie), with Louis Gossett, Jr., and Jason Gedrick.

Theatre 2: "Spies Like Us" (John Landis), with Chevy Chase and Dan Aykroyd.

R.K.O. Century Warner Twin, B'way at 47th. (975-8369)

Theatre 1: "Pray for Death" (Gordon Hessler), with Sho Kosugi.

Theatre 2: "The Jewel of the Nile" (Lewis Teague), with Michael Douglas, Kathleen Turner, and Danny DeVito.

U. A. Twin 1 and 2, B'way at 49th. (247-1635)

Theatre 1: "Troll" (John Buechler), with Noah Hathaway.

Theatre 2: Through Jan. 23: "The Alchemist." From Jan. 24: "My Chauffeur" (David Beaird), with Deborah Foreman and Sam Jones.

REVIVAL HOUSES

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)

Through Jan. 23: "Lady Chatterley's Lover" (1959; directed by Marc Allégret; in French), with Danielle Darrieux; and "Women in Love" (1970; Ken Russell), with Alan Bates, Oliver Reed, and Glenda Jackson.

Jan. 24-25: "A Clockwork Orange" (1971; Stanley Kubrick), with Malcolm McDowell, Patrick Magee, and Adrienne Corri; and "Blade Runner" (1982; Ridley Scott), with Harrison Ford and Rutger Hauer.

Jan. 26: "Madame Rosa" (1978; Moshe Mizrahi; in French), with Simone Signoret; and "Ship of Fools" (†).

Jan. 27-28: "Caligula" (1980), with Malcolm McDowell.

Jan. 29-30: "Amarcord" (1974; Federico Fellini; in Italian), with Bruno Zanin; and "The Clowns" (†).

Jan. 31-Feb. 1: "Eraserhead" (1977; David Lynch); and "The Elephant Man" (1980; David Lynch), with Anthony Hopkins and John Hurt.

Metro Cinema, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)

Jan. 22: "Floating Cloud" (1955; Mikio Naruse; in Japanese), with Hideko Takamine; and "The End of Summer" (1961; Yasujiro Ozu; in Japanese).

Jan. 23: "Ohayo" (1958) and "I Was Born, But . . ." (1932), both films in Japanese, directed by Yasujiro Ozu.

Jan. 24-25: "Yojimbo" (1961; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Toshiro Mifune; and "Rashomon" (1951; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Toshiro Mifune, Machiko Kyo, Masayuki Mori, and Takashi Shimura.

Jan. 26-27: "The Bad Sleep Well" (†); and "Scandal" (1950; Akira Kurosawa; in Japanese), with Toshiro Mifune and Yoshiko Yamaguchi.

Jan. 28: "Rebellion" (†); and "Harakiri" (1962; Masaki Kobayashi).

Jan. 29: "In the Realm of the Senses" (1977; Nagisa Oshima; in Japanese); and "Fires on the Plain" (1959; Kon Ichikawa; in Japanese).

Jan. 30: "The Makioka Sisters" (1983; Kon Ichikawa; in Japanese); and "Story of the Last Chrysanthemums" (1939; Kenji Mizoguchi; in Japanese).

Jan. 31-Feb. 1: To be announced.

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)

Jan. 22: "Margie" (1946; Henry King), with Jeanne Crain, Glenn Langan, and Alan Young; and "Good News" (1947; Charles Walters), with June Allyson, Peter Lawford, Mel Tormé, and Joan McCracken.

Jan. 23-25: "Laura" (1944; Otto Preminger), with Gene Tierney, Clifton Webb, Vincent Price, Dana Andrews, and Judith Anderson; and "Dial M for Murder" (1954; Alfred Hitchcock), with Ray Milland, Grace Kelly, Robert Cummings, Anthony Dawson, and John Williams.

Jan. 26-28: "The 400 Blows" (1959; François Truffaut; in French), with Jean-Pierre Léaud; and "Shoot the Piano Player" (†).

Jan. 29-Feb. 1: "Jules and Jim" (1962; François Truffaut; in French), with Jeanne Moreau, Oskar Werner, and Henri Serre; and "The Last Metro" (1981; François Truffaut; in French), with Catherine Deneuve, Gérard Depardieu, and Jean Poiret.

Thalia, B'way at 95th. (222-3370)

Jan. 22: "Richard III" (1956; Laurence Olivier), with Olivier, Claire Bloom, Ralph Richardson, John Gielgud, and Cedric Hardwicke.

Jan. 23: "The Fearless Vampire Killers" (1967; Roman Polanski), with Jack MacGowran and Sharon Tate; and "Phantom of the Paradise" (1974; Brian De Palma), with Paul Williams, William Finley, Jessica Harper, and Gerrit Graham.

Jan. 24: "A Fistful of Dollars" (1967) and "For a Few Dollars More" (1967), both films directed by Sergio Leone, with Clint Eastwood.

Jan. 25: "2001: A Space Odyssey" (1968; Stanley Kubrick), with Keir Dullea and Gary Lockwood.

Jan. 26: "The Wind" (1928; Victor Seastrom; a silent film), with Lillian Gish, Montagu Love, Lars Hanson, and Dorothy Cumming; and "The Scarlet Letter" (1926 †).

Jan. 27: "The Honeymoon Killers" (1970; Leonard Kastle), with Shirley Stoler and Tony Lo Bianco; and "King Blank" (1984).

Jan. 28: "Mildred Pierce" (†) and "Flamingo Road" (†).

Jan. 29: "Henry V" (1944), directed by, and with, Laurence Olivier; and "Falstaff" ("Chimes at Midnight;" 1967; Orson Welles), with Welles, Keith Baxter, and John Gielgud.

Jan. 30: "Paths of Glory" (†); and "La Grande Illusion" (1937; Jean Renoir; in French), with Erich von Stroheim, Jean Gabin, Pierre Fresnay, and Marcel Dalio.

Jan. 31: "New York, New York" (†).

Feb. 1: "The Arabian Nights" (1973; Pier Paolo Pasolini; in Italian); and "The Decameron" (1971; Pier Paolo Pasolini; in Italian), with Franco Citti, Ninetto Davoli, and Pasolini.

Thalia SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)

Jan. 22: "The Two of Us" (1967; Claude Berri; in French), with Michel Simon; and a second feature.

Jan. 23: "Shake, Rattle, and Rock" (1956; Edward L. Cahn), with Fats Domino; and "Rock All Night" (1957; Roger Corman).

Jan. 24-25: "Get Out Your Handkerchiefs" (1978; Bertrand Blier; in French), with Gérard Depardieu, Patrick Dewaere, Carole Laure, Michel Serrault, and Riton; and "The Marquise of O . . ." (1976; Eric Rohmer; in German), with Edith Clever and Bruno Ganz.

Jan. 26: "The Blue Angel" (1929; Josef von Sternberg; in German), with Marlene Dietrich, Emil Jannings, and Hans Albers; and "The Threepenny Opera" (1931; G. W. Pabst; in German), with Lotte Lenya.

Jan. 27: "Mondo Trasho" (1970; John Waters); and "Desperate Living" (1977; John Waters), with Edith Massey, Mink Stole, and Mary Vivian Pearce.

Jan. 28: "Macario" (1960; Roberto Gavaldon; a Mexican film, in Spanish); and "Simon of the Desert" (1965; Luis Buñuel; a short Mexican film, in Spanish), with Claudio Brook and Silvia Pinal.

Jan. 29: "Smithereens" (1982; Susan Seidelman), with Susan Berman; and "Groupies" (†).

Jan. 30: "Viking Women and the Sea Serpent" (1958; Roger Corman), with Abby Dalton and Susan Cabot; and "Voodoo Woman" (1967; Edward L. Cahn), with Marla English.

Jan. 31-Feb. 1: To be announced.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

Jan. 22: "Pygmalion" (1938; Anthony Asquith and Leslie Howard), with Howard and Wendy Hiller; and "Major Barbara" (1941; Gabriel Pascal), with Rex Harrison, Wendy Hiller, Robert Morley, Sybil Thorndike, and Robert Newton.

Jan. 23: "Queen Christina" (1934; Rouben Mamoulian), with Greta Garbo and John Gilbert; and "As You Desire Me" (1932; George Fitzmaurice), with Greta Garbo and Melvyn Douglas.

Jan. 24-25: "Young and Innocent" ("The Girl Was Young;" 1937; Alfred Hitchcock), with Derrick de Marney, Nova Pilbeam, Basil Radford, Percy Marmont, and Mary Clare; and "Murder" (1930; Alfred Hitchcock), with Herbert Marshall and Norah Baring.

Jan. 26: "Romeo and Juliet" (1968; Franco Zeffirelli), with Leonard Whiting, Olivia Hussey, John McEnery, Michael York, Pat Heywood, and Milo O'Shea; and "A Midsummer Night's Dream" (1935; Max Reinhardt and William Dieterle), with James Cagney and Mickey Rooney.

Jan. 27: "Persona" (1967; Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Bibi Andersson and Liv Ullmann; and "The Seventh Seal" (1956;

Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Max von Sydow, Gunnar Björnstrand, Bibi Andersson, and Nils Poppe.

Jan. 28: "The Shout" (1979; Jerzy Skolimowski), with Alan Bates, Susannah York, and John Hurt; and "Don't Look Now" (†).

Jan. 29: "Charlie Chan at Treasure Island" (1939; Norman Foster), with Sidney Toler as Chan; and "Charlie Chan at the Opera" (1936; Bruce Humberstone), with Warner Oland as Chan.

Jan. 30: "Ball of Fire" (1942; Howard Hawks), with Barbara Stanwyck and Gary Cooper; and "Lady of Burlesque" (†).

Jan. 31-Feb. 1: "The Paradine Case" (†) and "North by Northwest" (†).

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490; a limited number of tickets are available to those applying for them in person at the museum after 11 on the day of the showing.)

Theatre 1: Jan. 23 at 2:30: "The Happiest Days of Your Life" (1950; directed by Frank Launder), with Alastair Sim, Margaret Rutherford, and Joyce Grenfell. . . . ¶ Jan. 23 at 6: "The Belles of St. Trinians" (1954; Frank Launder), with Alastair Sim, Joyce Grenfell, and George Cole. . . . ¶ Jan. 24 at 2:30: "Laughter in Paradise" (1951; Mario Zampi), with Alastair Sim, Fay Compton, George Cole, and Joyce Grenfell. . . . ¶ Jan. 24 at 6: "The Card" (1952; Ronald Neame), with Alec Guinness, Glynis Johns, Valerie Hobson, and Petula Clark. . . . ¶ Jan. 25 at 12:30: A program of Warner Brothers cartoons. . . . ¶ Jan. 25 at 2:30: "The Belles of St. Trinians." . . . ¶ Jan. 25 at 5: "The Happiest Days of Your Life." . . . ¶ Jan. 26 at 12:30: A program of Warner Brothers cartoons. . . . ¶ Jan. 26 at 2: "The Card." . . . ¶ Jan. 26 at 5: "Laughter in Paradise." . . . ¶ Jan. 27 at 2:30: "Old Mother Riley, M.P." (1939; Oswald Mitchell), with Arthur Lucan. . . . ¶ Jan. 27 at 6 and Jan. 28 at 2:30: "Trouble in Store" (1953; John Paddy Carstairs), with Norman Wisdom and Margaret Rutherford. . . . ¶ Jan. 28 at 6: "Old Mother Riley, M.P." . . . ¶ Jan. 30 at 2:30: "Doctor in the House" (1954; Ralph Thomas), with Dirk Bogarde, Muriel Pavlow, Kenneth More, Kay Kendall, and James Robertson Justice. . . . ¶ Jan. 30 at 6: "Genevieve" (1953; Henry Cornelius), with John Gregson, Dinah Sheridan, Kenneth More, and Kay Kendall. . . . ¶ Jan. 31 at 2:30: "Raising a Riot" (1955; Wendy Toye), with Kenneth More, Ronald Squire, and Mandy Miller. . . . ¶ Jan. 31 at 6 and Feb. 1 at 2: "Simon and Laura" (1955; Muriel Box), with Peter Finch, Kay Kendall, Muriel Pavlow, and Ian Carmichael. . . . ¶ Feb. 1 at 5: "Raising a Riot."

Theatre 2: Jan. 23 at 1: A program of animated Japanese films. . . . ¶ Jan. 23 at 3 and 6:30: "Erika: Not in Vain, a Portrait" (1984; Barry Spinello), a documentary. . . . ¶ Jan. 24 at 3: "Face to Face" (1984; Adoor Gopalakrishnan; in Malayalam, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Jan. 24 at 6:30 and Jan. 25 at 2: "Summons for Mohan Joshi" (1984; Saeed Akhtar Mirza; in Hindi, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Jan. 25 at 5:30: "Face to Face." . . . ¶ Jan. 26 at 2: "Thyagayya" (1981; Bapu; in Telegu, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Jan. 26 at 5:30: "36 Chowringhee Lane" (1981; Aparna Sen; an Indian film, in English). . . . ¶ Jan. 27 at 6:30: "The Killing Floor" (1985; Bill Duke). Mr. Duke will be present. . . . ¶ Jan. 28 at 3: "Citizen Kane" (1941; Orson Welles), with Welles, Joseph Cotten, and Dorothy Comingore. . . . ¶ Jan. 28 at 6:30: "The Third Man" (1950; Carol Reed), with Orson Welles, Joseph Cotten, Alida Valli, and Trevor Howard. . . . ¶ Jan. 30 at 3 and 6:30: "Streetwise" (1984; Martin Bell), a documentary. . . . ¶ Jan. 31 at 3: "36 Chowringhee Lane." . . . ¶ Jan. 31 at 6:30: "Thyagayya." . . . ¶ Feb. 1 at 2: "The Mirage" (1983; Nirad N. Mohapatra; in Oriya, with English subtitles). . . . ¶ Feb. 1 at 5: "Half Truth" (1983; Govind Nihalani; in Hindi, with English subtitles).

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN THESE PAGES DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

Back to the Future—Directed by Robert Zemeckis, this piece of Pop Art Americana is a clever, generally engaging screwball comedy. Christopher Lloyd is the small-town crackpot inventor who builds a time machine, and Michael J. Fox is Marty, the seventeen-year-old high-school boy who is hurtled back thirty years to 1955, where his parents are seventeen-year-olds at the same school. The movie has the structure of a comedy classic, but it doesn't have the rambunctiousness or the maniacal edge; the thinking is cramped and conventional. With Lea Thompson and Crispin Glover. (Reviewed in our issue of 7/29/85.) (Criterion Theatres. . . . ¶ 23rd St. West Triplex; starting Jan. 24.)

The Bad Sleep Well (1960)—Kurosawa takes on the theme of corruption in business and government in this melodrama about how Toshiro Mifune tries to track down the men responsible for murdering his father. It's a strangely mixed movie—an attempt at social significance but with several borrowings from "Hamlet" that take bizarre forms: a giant wedding cake in the shape of an office building serves the plot function of the play within the play in "Hamlet." In Japanese. (Metro Cinema; Jan. 26-27.)

The Clowns (1971)—Fellini, and a glory. His view of the world has always been that it is like the circus—a land of buffoons, of wounds that deliver no hurt. This is the film that exactly and unsentimentally states it. In Italian. (Cinema Village; Jan. 29-30.)

The Color Purple—The popular novel by Alice Walker is about the bonding of Southern black women in the first half of the century. It's written in a raw, cadenced dialect, and it has a joyous emotional swing to it. Steven Spielberg, who directed the movie version, appears to have taken the novel seriously—inspirational tone, pop-folk religiosity, triumph of the human spirit, and all—and been intimidated by it. This family saga, spanning more than thirty years, is the clumsiest, least confident feature he has done. He filters everything through movies and sees rural Georgia in 1909 the way a European director might. The picture is muffled—it seems to be taking place in a made-up, faraway kingdom. With Desreta Jackson as the young Celie and Whoopi Goldberg taking over the role, Danny Glover, Willard Pugh, Margaret Avery, and Oprah Winfrey. (12/30/85) (Beekman, R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin, Cinema 3, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Theatres.)

Don't Look Now (1973)—A Daphne du Maurier story of the occult, presented in fast, splintered, almost subliminal imagery. Julie Christie and Donald Sutherland team up wonderfully as parents whose drowned daughter may or may not be sending them messages. The meanings are on a simple Hitchcock level, but the unnerving cold ominousness of the environment (mostly Venice, deserted at the end of the season) says that things are not what they seem. Nicolas Roeg is a chillingly chic director; the picture is an example of high-fashion gothic sensibility, but there's a distasteful clamminess about it. Roeg's style is in love with disintegration. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 28.)

Flamingo Road (1949)—Joan Crawford, the screen's supreme masochist, at it again. This time, she's a carnival hootchy-kootchy dancer stranded in a small town; she gets involved with a weakling—Zachary Scott, the same heel who betrayed her in "Mildred Pierce"—and she's implicated in murder again, and she has the same director, Michael Curtiz. But the script lacks the mythic, overwrought James M. Cainisms of the earlier film. It's just garishly overwrought. David Brian is the local political boss who falls in love with the heroine; he seems not to see what we see—that she's rigid, monstrous. With Sydney Greenstreet, Gladys George, and Gertrude Michael. (Thalia; Jan. 28.)

Fool for Love—With Sam Shepard, Kim Basinger, Randy Quaid, and Harry Dean Stanton; directed by Robert Altman. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Plaza; through Jan. 30. . . . ¶ Quad Cinema; starting Jan. 24.)

Groupies (1970)—The baby rock-band molls here are a spooky bunch of junior hookers and hardened name-droppers. Because of their extreme youth, brazen parasitism, and specialized shallowness, they're fascinating; they're gutsy little girls but, like all hangers-on, they're depressing. The subject is so good that this documentary holds one's speculative interest even though the crew didn't bring much skill or depth to the project. Directed by Ron Dorfman and Peter Nevard. (Thalia SoHo; Jan. 29.)

101 Dalmatians (1961)—Late Disney, but for once not vulgar. This is most delicately drawn, with beautiful graphics of Nash's London and an entrancing espionage chain of dogs barking at one another from signal points across the island, like the beacon flares before the Armada. (New Embassy 49th St.)

Jagged Edge—This thriller doesn't offer the pleasures of style, but it does the job. Jeff Bridges plays the San Francisco newspaper publisher-editor who is tried for the murder of his rich wife, who owned the paper; Peter Coyote is the D.A. prosecuting him; and Glenn Close is the radiantly blond woman lawyer who defends him, and falls in love with him. Working from a script by Joe Eszterhas that's smart, pared down, and efficient, the director, Richard Marquand, sets up the situations and delivers the payoffs; he doesn't show much in the way of imagination or devotion to craft, but he gets distinctively pungent performances. With Robert Loggia, Leigh Taylor-Young, Marshall Colt, and Karen Austin. (11/4/85) (Quad Cinema; through Jan. 23. . . . ¶ Manhattan; starting Jan. 24.)

Kiss of the Spider Woman—Set in a nameless South American country, Hector Babenco's film is about a homosexual window dresser, Molina (William Hurt), and a revolutionary, Valentín (Raul Julia), who share a prison cell. Molina tries to comfort Valentín and help him forget his pain and misery by telling him the stories of old movies. Hurt is just about the only thing to look at; he's very likable in the scenes where Molina reveals his tenderness and warmth and humor. But it's a slack piece of moviemaking, and as sentimental as the forties screen romances that Molina is infatuated with. This Brazilian production, made in English, from Manuel Puig's novel, was shot in São Paulo. (8/26/85) (D. W. Griffith, and Quad Cinema. . . . ¶ Olympia Quad; starting Jan. 31.)

Lady of Burlesque (1943)—Gypsy Rose Lee's murder-mystery novel, "The G-String Murders," cleaned up, and burlesque as an institution considerably tamed. Barbara Stanwyck's bumps and grinds are communicated via her face and a few percussion sounds, but she acts with a hard realism that suggests something of the milieu, and Michael O'Shea, who plays opposite her, has a relaxed show-biz authenticity. With J. Edward Bromberg, Iris Adrian, and Marion Martin. Considering how few of Gypsy Rose Lee's racy bits are actually left, the director, William Wellman, does a good job of simulating raciness. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 30.)

Mildred Pierce (1945)—Joan Crawford rises from poverty to affluence and then suffers glamorously in beach house, roadhouse, and mansion from the nasty semi-incestuous goings on of her cad husband (Zachary Scott) and her spoiled daughter (Ann Blyth). Miss Crawford's heavy breathing was certified as acting when she won an Academy Award for her performance here. Michael Curtiz directed this glossy adaptation of the James M. Cain novel. With Jack Carson and Eve Arden. (Thalia; Jan. 28.)

New York, New York (1977)—An honest failure. This big-budget musical film, directed by Martin Scorsese, suffers from too many conflicting intentions. The director seems to be feeling his way through a forest of possibilities (he shot a much longer film and then cut it down to a hundred and thirty-seven minutes). Robert De Niro plays a restless hipster, a tenor-sax player who's frustrated in the big-band era—he's already into the progressive bop that's not yet accepted. Liza Minnelli is a big-band singer who becomes popular with a wide audience through records and in musical movies. The story is about their meeting at a V-J Day celebration, their marriage, its dissolution, and their diverging musical paths. With Diahnne Abbott, Lionel Stander, Barry Primus, Mary Kay Place, and George Auld. (In 1981, a longer version—two hours and forty-three minutes—was released, with Minnelli's number "Happy Endings" restored. This is the version being shown.) (Thalia; Jan. 31.)

North by Northwest (1959)—The title (from Hamlet's "I am but mad north-northwest: when the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a handsaw") is the clue to the demented geography and the improbable plot. Though not as cleverly original as "Strangers on a Train," or as cleverly sexy as "Notorious," this is one of Hitchcock's most entertaining American thrillers. Just about everybody in it is a spy or a government agent (except the hero, Cary Grant, who is mistaken for one). Grant's performance is very smooth and appealing, and he looks so fit that he gets by with having Jessie Royce Landis, who was born the same year he was, playing his mother. With Eva Marie Saint, James Mason, Leo G. Carroll, and Martin Landau. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 31-Feb. 1.)

Out of Africa—Adult, cryptic, self-conscious, and unsatisfying, it attempts to romanticize the lives of the high-strung Danish woman (played by Meryl Streep) who ran a coffee plantation in Kenya, saw herself as a patrician, and wrote under the name Isak Dinesen, and the handsome English big-game hunter Denys Finch Hatton (Robert Redford). Directed by Sydney Pollack, from a script by Kurt Luedtke, the picture squirms around trying to make these people morally acceptable to a modern audience. Streep is animated in the early scenes, but Redford doesn't give out with anything for her to play against, and the energy goes out of her performance. The film hums a little when Klaus Maria Brandauer or Michael Kitchen or Suzanna Hamilton is on the screen; they're recognizably human. (12/30/85) (Loews Tower East, R.K.O. Art Greenwich Twin, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Loews State.)

The Paradine Case (1947)—There are few thrills in this big misconceived courtroom thriller, directed by Hitchcock. Talky and stiff, the film never finds the passionate tone that it needs. The story is about a barrister (Gregory Peck) who louses up a murder case because he falls in love with the defendant, his mysterious client Mrs. Paradine (Alida Valli). The judge is played by Charles Laughton, and Ethel Barrymore (looking very elegant) is the judge's sensitive, mistreated wife. Also with Ann Todd, Louis Jourdan, Charles Coburn, Isabel Elsom, and Leo G. Carroll, who are mostly miserably miscast. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Jan. 31-Feb. 1.)

Paths of Glory (1957)—Stanley Kubrick directed this version of Humphrey Cobb's novel, photographed in Germany. It is not so much an anti-war film as an attack on the military mind. The strong liberal-intellectual pitch makes it genuinely controversial, though it was certainly easier to be anti-militaristic in a film made in peacetime and set during the First World War than it would have been in a film set during the Second World War. The story is about the class structure within the French Army—the aristocratic generals in their spacious, sunlit châteaux and the proletarian soldiers in the dark trenches; trapped between them is Colonel Dax (Kirk Douglas), who commiserates with the men but is powerless—he carries out the orders of the high command. With Adolphe Menjou, George Macready, Ralph Meeker, Wayne Morris, Richard Anderson, and Timothy Carey. (Thalia; Jan. 30.)

Prizzi's Honor—This John Huston picture has a ripe and daring comic tone. It revels voluptuously in the murderous finagling of the members of a Brooklyn Mafia family, and rejoices in their scams. Jack Nicholson's average-guyness as Charley, the clan's enforcer, is the film's touchstone: this a baroque comedy about people who behave in ordinary ways in grotesque circumstances. Everything in this picture works with everything else—which is to say that John Huston has it all in the palm of his big, bony hand. With William Hickey, Anjelica Huston, Kathleen Turner, and John

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Randolph. (7/1/85) (Film Forum, and 57th St. Playhouse; through Jan. 23.)

Ran—Set in the sixteenth century, Kurosawa's epic spectacle, a variation on the theme of "King Lear," is static, but it deepens, and it has its own ornery splendor. It's a totally conceptualized work—perhaps the biggest piece of conceptual art ever made. For the first forty minutes or so, the picture is all preparation, and it seems dead, but then the preparation begins to pay off, and by the end the fastidiousness and the monumental scale of what Kurosawa has undertaken can flood you with admiration. With Mieko Harada as Lady Kaede, the vengeful demon who brings down the House of Ichimonji; Tatsuya Nakadai as the warlord head of the clan; the Japanese transvestite pop star known as Peter as the Fool; and Hisashi Ikawa as Kurogane, who defies Lady Kaede. The fine, harsh, percussive score is by Toru Takemitsu. In Japanese. (2 hours and 41 minutes.) (1/13/86) (Cinema I.)

Rebellion (1967)—Masaki Kobayashi, who made a famous anti-militarist trilogy, directed this story of a rebellion against feudal power. At the climax, Toshiro Mifune and Tatsuya Nakadai have a geometrically planned and handsomely choreographed swordfight. In Japanese. (Metro Cinema; Jan. 28.)

The Scarlet Letter (1926)—"I wanted to make a film of 'The Scarlet Letter.' . . . I was asked which director I would like, and I chose Victor Sjöström, who had arrived at M-G-M some years earlier from Sweden. I felt that the Swedes were closer to the feelings of New England Puritans than modern Americans." With historic simplicity, Lillian Gish described the background to this film. She leaves it for us to explain her extraordinary taste and judgment—and her acting genius. Her Hester Prynne is one of the most beautifully sustained performances in screen history—mercurial, delicate, passionate. There isn't an actress on the screen today, and perhaps there never was another, who can move like Lillian Gish: it's as if no bones, no physical barriers stood between her intuitive understanding of the role and her expression of it. Sjöström chose the Swedish actor Lars Hanson for Arthur Dimmesdale; Henry B. Walthall plays Prynne. Karl Dane is also in the cast. The cinematography is by Hendrik Sartov, who had earlier worked with Griffith; the adaptation—or diminution—of Hawthorne is by Frances Marion. Sjöström presents a heroine struggling against moralistic conventions; his conception is so strong that the coy elements in the scenario and the cloying titles almost disappear from consciousness. He stages Lars Hanson's final revelation scene with a power and conviction that justifies Lillian Gish's hunch: these two Swedes understand Hawthorne's guilt and suffering. (There have been numerous versions of the novel—the first in 1908.) Silent. (Thalia; Jan. 26.)

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Ship of Fools (1965)—An ocean-liner "Grand Hotel." Katherine Anne Porter's novel was set in 1931, and though she explained the title as referring to the "simple, almost universal image of the ship of this world on its voyage to eternity," her vessel was also a microcosm of the pre-Nazi world, and the director, Stanley Kramer, and the scenarist, Abby Mann, move the date to 1933 and turn her conception into a pompous cartoon. The movie is staccato, loud, and crude, and the relationships in the book are deformed. With George Segal, Elizabeth Ashley, Oskar Werner, Simone Signoret, Lee Marvin, and José Ferrer. (Cinema Village; Jan. 26.)

Shoah—Claude Lanzmann's nine-hour-and-twenty-three-minute documentary epic "Shoah" is made up of interviews with people who have knowledge of the Nazi extermination centers—whether as slave laborers, railroad workers, technicians, bureaucrats, or just onlookers. The film has fine, painful moments, and it's widely regarded as a masterpiece. But some may feel that it lacks the moral complexity of a great work, and may also find it logy and diffuse, and exhausting right from the start. Divided into Part I (four hours and thirty-three minutes) and Part II (four hours and fifty minutes). In Polish, French, German, English, Hebrew, and Yiddish, with English subtitles where necessary. (12/30/85) (Cinema Studio.)

Shoot the Piano Player (1960)—This François Truffaut film busts out all over—and that's what's wonderful about it. Comedy, pathos, and tragedy are all scrambled up. Each time Charlie, the sad-faced little piano player (Charles Aznavour), has cared about someone he has suffered, and now he just wants to be "out of it." This is a comedy about melancholia—perhaps the only comedy about melancholia. Truffaut is freely inventive here—a young director willing to try almost anything—and Charlie's encounters with the world are filled with good and bad jokes, bits from old Sacha Guitry films, and homage to the American Grade-B gangster films of the forties and fifties. Nothing is clear-cut; the ironies crisscross and bounce. With Nicole Berger, Marie Dubois, Albert Rémy, Michèle Mercier, and Daniel Boulanger. In French. (Regency; Jan. 26-28.)

Sweet Dreams—As the pop-and-country singer Patsy Cline, Jessica Lange has a raw physicality that's challenging and heroic. The singing voice that comes out of her is from the vocal tracks of recordings that Patsy Cline made between 1960 and 1963, and Lange's body lives up to the sound. The director, Karel Reisz, doesn't step back from Patsy; she's taken on her own terms. As Patsy's husband, Ed Harris brings the role a tragic, pitiable sweetness. With Ann Wedgeworth as Patsy's mother. People cry at this movie though it isn't sentimental—it's an honest tearjerker. (10/21/85) (Festival.)

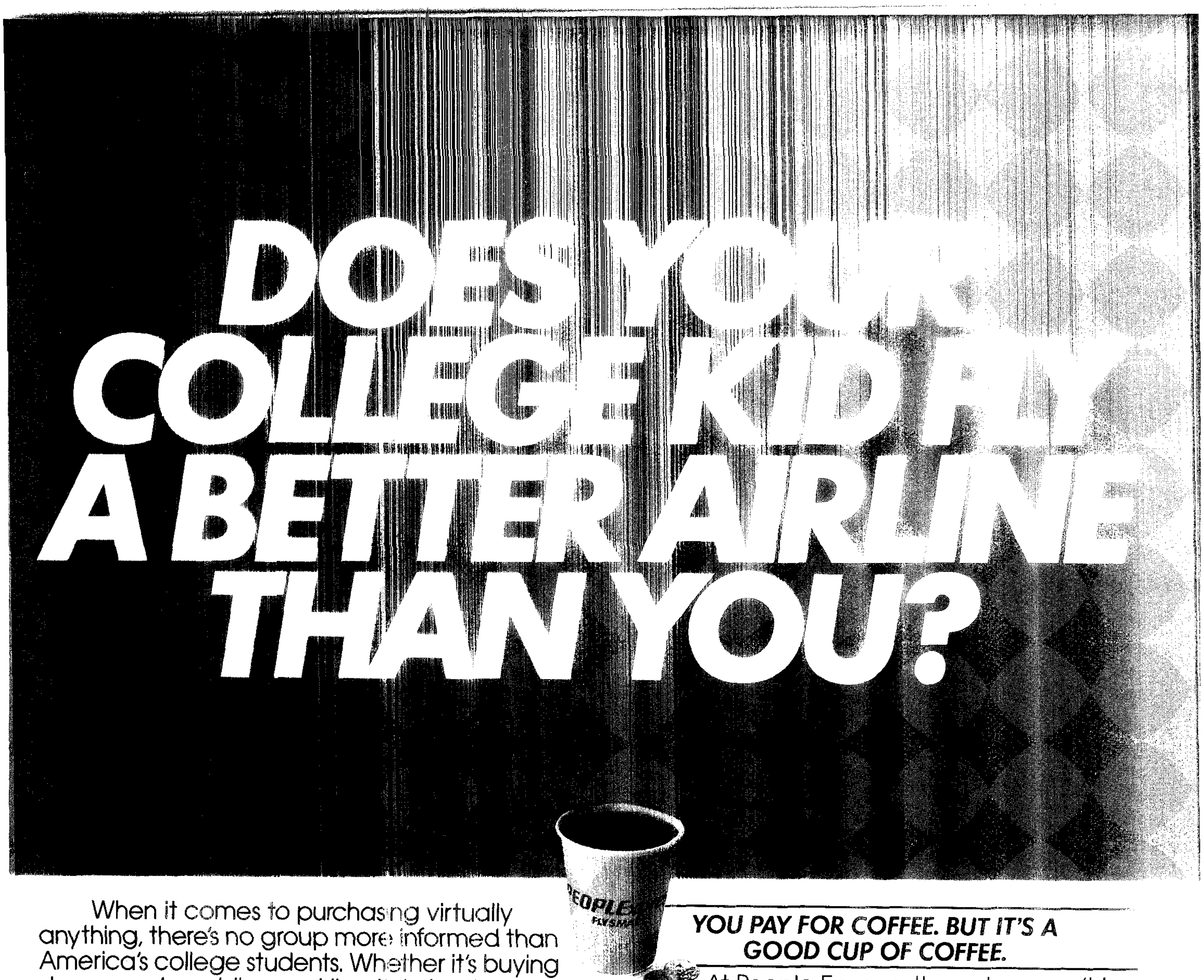
The Trip to Bountiful—Geraldine Page gives a controlled, all-out performance as Carrie Watts, an old-age pensioner who wears seat-sprung housedresses and lives in a tiny apartment in Houston with her sad, defeated son and his shrill wife, who keeps picking on her The movie—a weeper—is about Carrie's longing to escape and return to Bountiful, the Gulf Coast town where she grew up; she runs away, gets on a bus headed in the right direction, and lives out her dream. Directed by Peter Masterson, from Horton Foote's adaptation of his 1953 teleplay (Lillian Gish starred in it on TV and Broadway), it's a "spiritual" picture—a tribute to the decency of the common people who endure by doing the best they can, and it has the glow that movies get when they're about the need to have compassion. The camera is meant to be the mirror of Carrie's soul, but we look in that mirror for so long that finally all we see is Geraldine Page acting. Foote can't make poetry out of material as laundered and denatured as what he comes up with here. The movie is intended to be a hymn, but all he and Masterson can do is give some of the characters a limp, anesthetized grace. With John Heard as the son, Carlin Glynn as the daughter-in-law, Rebecca DeMornay as a soldier's young wife, and Richard Bradford as a Texas sheriff. (1/13/86) (Cinema II.)

Twice in a Lifetime—This miracle of psychobanality presents the basic story of a long-married middle-aged man (Gene Hackman as a Seattle steelworker) who experiences a renewal of vitality when he has an affair with a younger woman (Ann-Margret), but the story is now so dressed up in the language of self-help books that the man is a life-affirming force—and not only for himself but also for his wife of thirty years (Ellen Burstyn) whom he leaves. The movie could be every errant husband's self-justifying fantasy. Directed by Bud Yorkin, from a script by Colin Welland. With Amy Madigan, Brian Dennehy, and Ally Sheedy. (12/2/85) (Gemini and Lincoln Plaza.)

White Nights—The magnificent Mikhail Baryshnikov plays a Russian ballet star who defected from the Soviet Union to the U.S. and is on his way to dance in Tokyo when his plane crash-lands in Siberia. The movie's centra gimmick is that the ballet dancer is put in the care of a black American tap dancer (Gregory Hines, acting morose and embittered) who defected from the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War. The tap dancer is miserable, and now a K.G.B. colonel tells him that if he can't convince the ballet star to renounce the U.S. and perform in just a few days at a Kirov gala, he'll be sent to work in the mines. This cheap melodramatic plot is like a straitjacket that the director, Taylor Hackford, got into voluntarily and can't wriggle out of. It's often ludicrously bad, but there's enough footage of Baryshnikov to carry you past the embarrassments of the tacky script. With Isabella Rossellini, Jerzy Skolimowski, Geraldine Page, Helen Mirren and John Glover. The script is credited to James Goldman and Eric Hughes. (11/18/85 (34th St. East, Coronet, and Ziegfeld through Jan. 30. . . . ¶ Embassy 72nd St. Olympia Quad, and Embassy 1; starting Jan 31.)

Young Sherlock Holmes—With Nicholas Rowe and Alan Cox, directed by Barry Levinson (Reviewed in this issue.) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews Orpheum, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Loews Astor Plaza.)

Albert Hubbell



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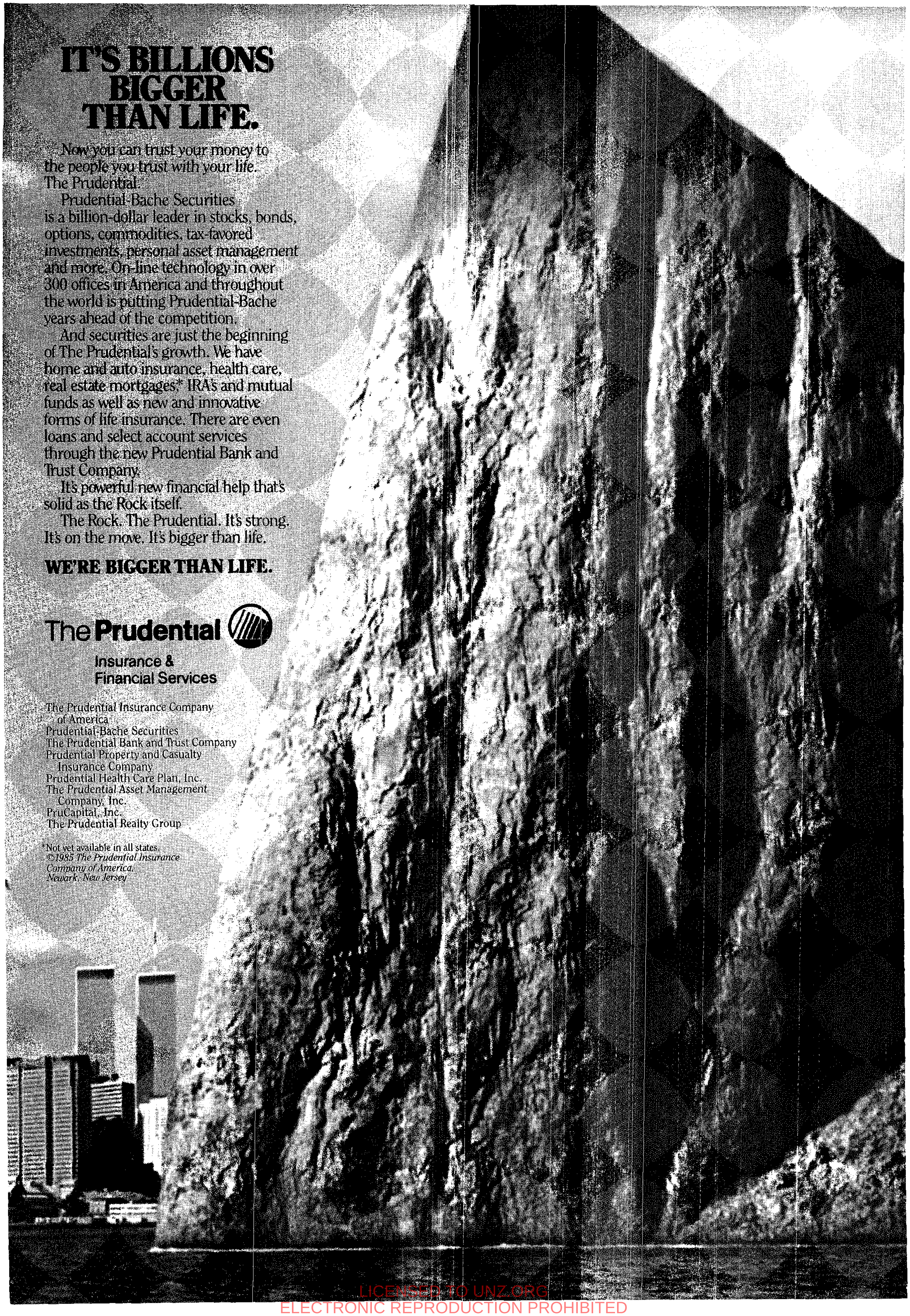

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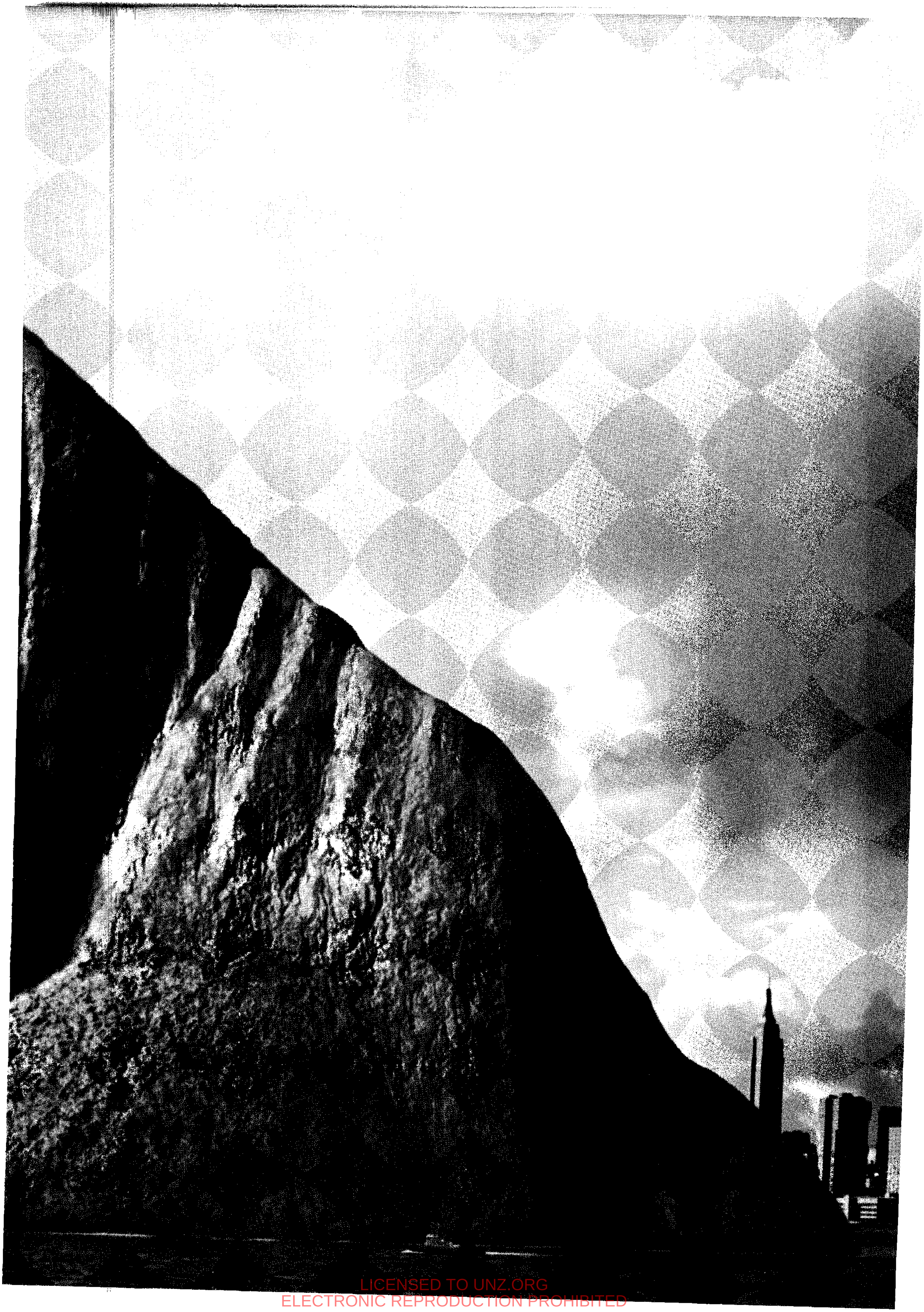

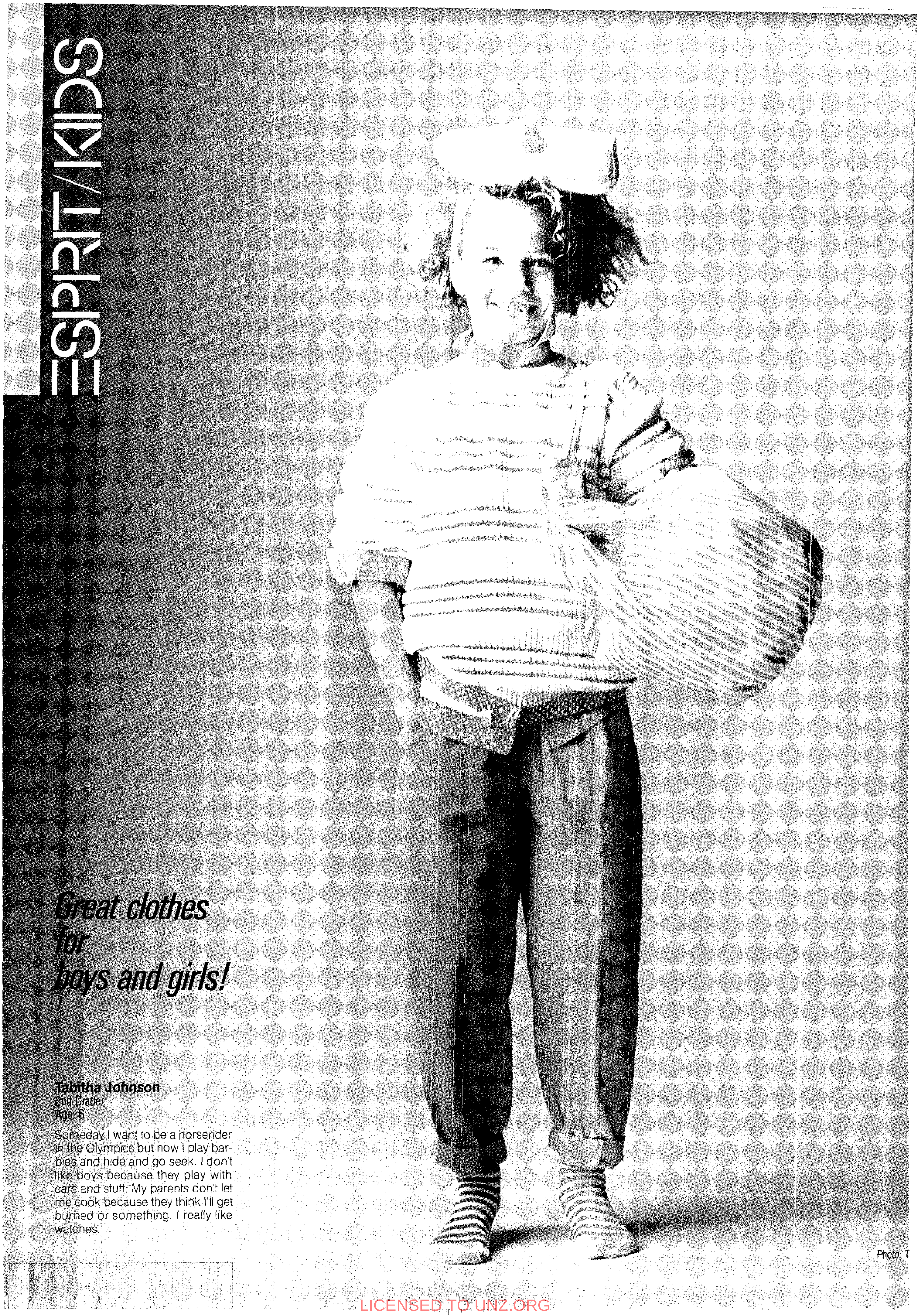

ESPRIT/KIDS

Great clothes
for
boys and girls!

Tabitha Johnson
2nd Grader
Age: 6

Someday I want to be a horserider in the Olympics but now I play barbies and hide and go seek. I don't like boys because they play with cars and stuff. My parents don't let me cook because they think I'll get burned or something. I really like watches.

Photo: T

THE
NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

FROM time to time, well-meaning people, using the most compellingly rational arguments, urge us all to subordinate our love for the particular country we live in—our patriotism—to a love for all mankind. They point out that as long as we give our highest allegiance to one country we are at risk of going to war with others, and that in the nuclear age this can mean the annihilation of everybody forever. They note that an emotion born of people's impulse to protect their own countries has in our time become a threat to the survival of all countries. They observe that in this case the sum of everyone's self-interest may lead not to the betterment of all but to total self-defeat. And they are surely right. The trouble is that the recommended emotional shift, no matter how logical or necessary all of us may decide it to be, just doesn't seem to happen. Obdurately, our countries stir visceral, warmhearted, resonant sentiments, while mankind inspires only a tepid, cerebral loyalty, as if we were being invited to transfer our affections to a mere abstraction. Our minds carry us to a place to which our hearts, it seems, are reluctant to follow.

It's good to be able to report, therefore, that a movie has been made that helps to bridge the gap, if not, perhaps, to inspire full-fledged terrestrial patriotism. It is the documentary on the space shuttle called "The Dream Is Alive," which is now being shown on the giant screen (forty feet tall and sixty-six feet wide) in the Naturemax Theatre at the American Museum of Natural History, and which includes shots of the earth from the shuttle. Of course, by now everyone has seen plenty of pictures of the earth taken from space—usually we see the picture of the small, delicate globe hanging like a lone Christmas ornament against the black emptiness. Those pictures inspire a tender and anxious solicitude for our planetary residence—certainly a sentiment appropriate to our species' nuclear plight, but one lacking in the robust enthusiasm that characterizes patriotism. The shots of the earth in "The Dream Is Alive" are different. For one thing, they are taken from a low orbital flight rather than from deep space, and though they show the surface of the planet at a considerable remove—the experience is something like looking down at a large atlas on a table—you are not at such a distance that the earth dwindles to a nervous-making tininess. Orbital views are also familiar, of course, but the ones in this film made us, for our part, feel that we were seeing the earth for the first time. Perhaps the giant screen accounts for the difference. The scenes of the earth fill the eye. The eye must roam—head turning—to take it all in. Not the earth's limits and its trembling frailty but its sunlit spaciousness, its superabundance, its splendor are what you see, and you are lost in wonder. At one point, a gracefully curved slice of the earth—warm, blue, alive—appears at the top of the screen. Suspended in an up that is man's down, this sky-colored earth is a celestial earth—earth as heaven. At another point, as Italy glides by (tawny against an azure Mediterranean), its leg-and-boot shape distinct and recognizable (it's quite moving to see how many of the shapes on view are old friends, known from early childhood), the narrator, Walter Cronkite—that eloquent partisan of space travel—is inspired to mention some of the peaks of human achievement reached in the ancient cities drifting past in the landscape below. Here in Genoa, he reminds us, Christopher Columbus was born. Here in Venice, the Italian Renaissance flowered. Here in the islands of the Mediterranean, Homer sent Odysseus on his deathless homeward journey. The tour ended as we floated over the Nile, but it might have gone on forever, for there are not many corners of the globe where some human being or other did not do some great thing. Listening to Walter Cronkite, we began to feel within ourself that fruitful reflexive, back-and-forth movement between the love of self and the love of community whereby patriotism is so powerfully fuelled. For a moment, the forbidding emotional task of loving mankind and its habitat, the earth, became a matter of simple local pride.

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A FRIEND writes:

The Dow Jones industrial average dropped precipitously one day recently. News spread that unemployment had gone down, and this led some traders to believe that interest rates might cease their decline, whereupon, in the fifth-heaviest day of trading in the history of the New York Stock Exchange, the average fell 39.10 points. "Panic may be a bit of an overstatement," Jack Conlon, the head trader for E. F. Hutton, told the *Times*, "but clearly there was a sense of urgency on the part of the professional trading community." Almost certainly, this drop did not herald a new Great Depression, or even a bear market. I say that confidently, but the truth is that I don't really know.

The day after the Dow fell, I was

skiing on a Vermont mountain. We—a friend and I—skied Snowdance and Exhibition, Deer Run and South Bowl, and then we headed up on the Canyon chair lift for one more run, and, all of a sudden, the lift stopped. My chair, and all the others in the long line, swung in the cold breeze, thirty or forty feet above the snow. This was, for a moment, unremarkable. Ski lifts halted fairly often, we knew—some novice might drop his poles getting on, say, and the man at the bottom would hit a button. But usually—in my experience, invariably—the lift started up again inside of a minute. This time, the chair just hung there. After a few minutes, men on snowmobiles appeared, racing up and down the slope, shouting into walkie-talkies, climbing the towers that support the lift. They were dressed in matching red-and-blue ski jackets, and they seemed to know what they were doing. After a few more minutes, a pleasant, tanned young man stopped beneath my chair. He was carrying a length of rope, and he chucked it over the cable. At the end of the rope was a small harness. I slipped it under my arms and, after a moment's contemplation, pushed myself off into space. Several ski patrolmen held the other end of the rope, and lowered me slowly to the ground. I looked in front of my eyes to see if my life was passing, but it wasn't. Total dangling time couldn't have been more than twenty seconds, and on the list of scary life experiences it ranked well beneath being told by a maître d' that I really should be wearing a jacket. The men doing the rescuing were calm and calming: they'd obviously practiced, and they reassured us, and when we got to the ground they gave us passes good for a day's free skiing. It was no problem. Still, I didn't know that when I got on the lift.

The confident expectation that, come trouble, trained men will appear to fix it marks our advanced age. If my car breaks down on a back road, if I catch some odd disease, if I lock myself out of my apartment, if I am accused of some crime, I know that someone's occupation involves making sure that I come out fine. And not just personal problems: when the subway stops in the tunnel, I expect the motorman to announce the cause of the delay and to quickly get the train rolling again; when the power fails, I expect engineers to reroute electricity from around the Northeast before my freezer defrosts; if the people of my country manage to elect a disorderly President, I expect newspaper reporters to uncover his delinquencies and a shocked Congress to force him from office. And I suppose I expect that if the economy begins to go seriously wrong, men in identical suits will drive up in limousines, make some phone calls, and fix it. But this belief is shakier than the others. Even though there has been no repetition of the Great Depression in my lifetime, and even though the subway stops every third night or so, the economy *feels* more fragile than the subway. That must be a hangover from 1929—from the idea that the economy can wake up in the morning looking hearty and go to bed that night on the edge of death, not because of any change in the ability of people to work, not because someone has discovered that the nation has run out of iron ore, not because of anything except a new hunch or fear. Safeguards have been installed—the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. I am sure all these things will work. But if a drop in unemployment can make the market skittish—can instill a "sense of urgency" in "the professional trading community"—what happens if the price of oil collapses, if Mexico defaults on its loans, if any of a dozen other things happen that I don't even know enough about to think of. Probably nothing—everything will be fine. Still, one gets on a ski lift because one assumes that they wouldn't operate it if they didn't know how to rescue you in case of trouble. One doesn't decide about joining the economy, and the belief in its safety may have less to do with conviction than with desire and necessity.

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Dian Fossey

DIAN FOSSEY's recent death, at her camp in the Virunga Mountains, in Rwanda, saddened us. Her obituary in the *Times* said she had been killed by "unknown assailants," but it is likely that they were the poachers she had fought for so many years, who, looking for zoo specimens or "trophies," had killed so many of the mountain gorillas that she devoted her life to. She had recently gone back to Rwanda after a couple of years as a visiting professor at Cornell University, and one sensed that the return to the preserve was a kind of homecoming for her. The gorillas that she had studied for eighteen years and had written about in a 1983 book, "Gorillas in the Mist," are, she said, "uniquely noble" creatures. They are brave, affectionate, tolerant of both the boisterous young and the ill-behaved older members of their clan, loving and nurturing as parents, stable as family members, and apparently "happy." It is easy to see how she might have preferred them to people.

Fossey first came to public attention eight years ago, when her beloved gorilla Digit was killed by poachers in 1977. In the months following Digit's death, others in her small group fell prey to poachers. Her despair was evident—especially once she realized that the preserve's guards often worked in collusion with the poachers. Reluctant to turn Digit into a sacrificial victim, but feeling that his death might help in the fight to protect the rapidly diminishing species, she allowed him to become the figurehead of a drive to raise funds for preservation of the mountain gorilla. It was the right decision. One of Fossey's colleagues, Dr. Alison Jolly, who is a zoologist at Rockefeller University, said the other day that she hoped Fossey's own death might end up doing as much good as Digit's had. "If she just dies and then the gorillas die, the whole world should be ashamed of itself," Dr. Jolly said. "But if she becomes a martyr the world might come to its senses."

It was the paleontologist Louis Leakey who gave Dian Fossey the chance to study the mountain gorilla. In 1966, when she was living in Louisville, Kentucky, and working as an occupational therapist, Leakey came through on a lecture tour and sought her out. Three years before, she had taken out a bank loan and gone on a long-awaited trip to Africa. There she had met Louis Leakey and his wife, the archeologist Mary Leakey, at their famous site at Olduvai Gorge. From Olduvai she had gone on to visit the gorilla preserve. Later, Leakey remembered her as the bumbling tourist who had tripped and fallen on one of their fossils and broken her ankle. At the conclusion of what she described as a "brief interview" in Louisville, he suggested that she become the "gorilla girl" he was looking for. Dian Fossey had virtually no experience with the animals she was to devote the rest of her life to.

Fossey got to the Virunga Mountains none too soon. The small band of mountain gorillas had been reduced since they were studied in 1959 and 1960 by George Schaller, who was a young graduate student and is now the director of Wildlife Conservation International, a division of the New York Zoological Society. The destruction continued. When Fossey did a formal count in 1981, she found that the population had been halved since Schaller's study. Only two hundred and forty-two gorillas survived in their protected habitat. But recently she thought she had begun to see a turn for the better.

Fossey had gone alone to Africa, and while she had the company of students and of her devoted African staff she essentially remained alone over her eighteen years of research. She wasn't easy to work with. She was impatient with clumsy researchers and with tourists eager for a glimpse of the gorillas. She couldn't understand why any researcher would expect to be paid for his or her work. "I had never been salaried and felt that the research should be its own reward," she wrote. One former colleague has commented, "She didn't suffer fools gladly, and she didn't suffer intelligent people gladly, either." The environment itself was daunting. Her sheet-metal huts were ten thousand feet up in the mountains, and visitors arrived exhausted and dizzy from the altitude. Their welcome was not invariably warm.

We met Dian Fossey in 1982, at a dinner given by the Leakey Foundation at the Smithsonian Institution, in Washington. We ate in the Hall of Gems, on starched white table linen laden with silver and elegant food, and surrounded by display cases of dazzling jewels, the Hope diamond among them. It was a room full of field anthropologists. But Dian Fossey stood out even there. Her altogether proper clothes seemed somehow ill-fitting on her broad shoulders. She seemed shy and unapproachable. She was too tall for the room, too free for the restrictions of cocktail conversation, too gentle for the elbows and the competition.

Fossey's colleagues believe that her work will go on—or, possibly, limp on. She trained many students over the years, and they and others will pick up the threads as best they can.

"Was she irreplaceable?" we asked George Schaller when we heard about her death.

"Most certainly her dedication was unique," he said. "Very seldom do you get such an emotional involvement with an animal or with a place—especially a place as difficult as that one. Part of the uniqueness of her effort is that it went on for eighteen years. It was the kind of perseverance that the gorillas need. Dedication like that is hard to come by."

Dr. Schaller had confirmed something that we suppose we already knew: Fossey herself represented a kind of endangered species.

DARE TO RULE
The Autobiography of a King

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Reception

MORE than three hundred people crowded the reception rooms of the Asia Society one evening not long ago, and they were unusually pretty people. You get a fairly handsome crowd at any formal reception in New York, but there was something special about this group. Many of the women—whether Indian or not—wore saris or Punjabi dress. India happens to be very, very big in New York just now, but there was nothing particularly timely about these festivities. They were merely "a champagne reception" to view what the invitation specifically called "Akbar's India: Art from the Mughal City of Victory." (The City of Victory is Fatehpur Sikri.) The hosts were the Indian ambassadors to the United States and the United Nations and the president and trustees of Mount Holyoke College, in South Hadley, Massachusetts, which for the past sixty-five years has had a sister institution in India—the Women's Christian College, in Madras.

It came about like this. In 1915, the then president of Mount Holyoke, itself founded in 1837, was Mary E. Woolley, who was on the board of the just established Women's Christian College. In 1920, Mount Holyoke adopted the college as a sister school, and just a few years later Mount Holyoke students began raising money for it. Everybody concerned continued to be concerned. The Madras college was one of Mount Holyoke's preoccupations then, and it still is. Indian girls come to study at South Hadley, and, in return, American girls have sojourns in India. All this partly accounted for the numbers of Asian girls helping out at the party or joining in with the guests.

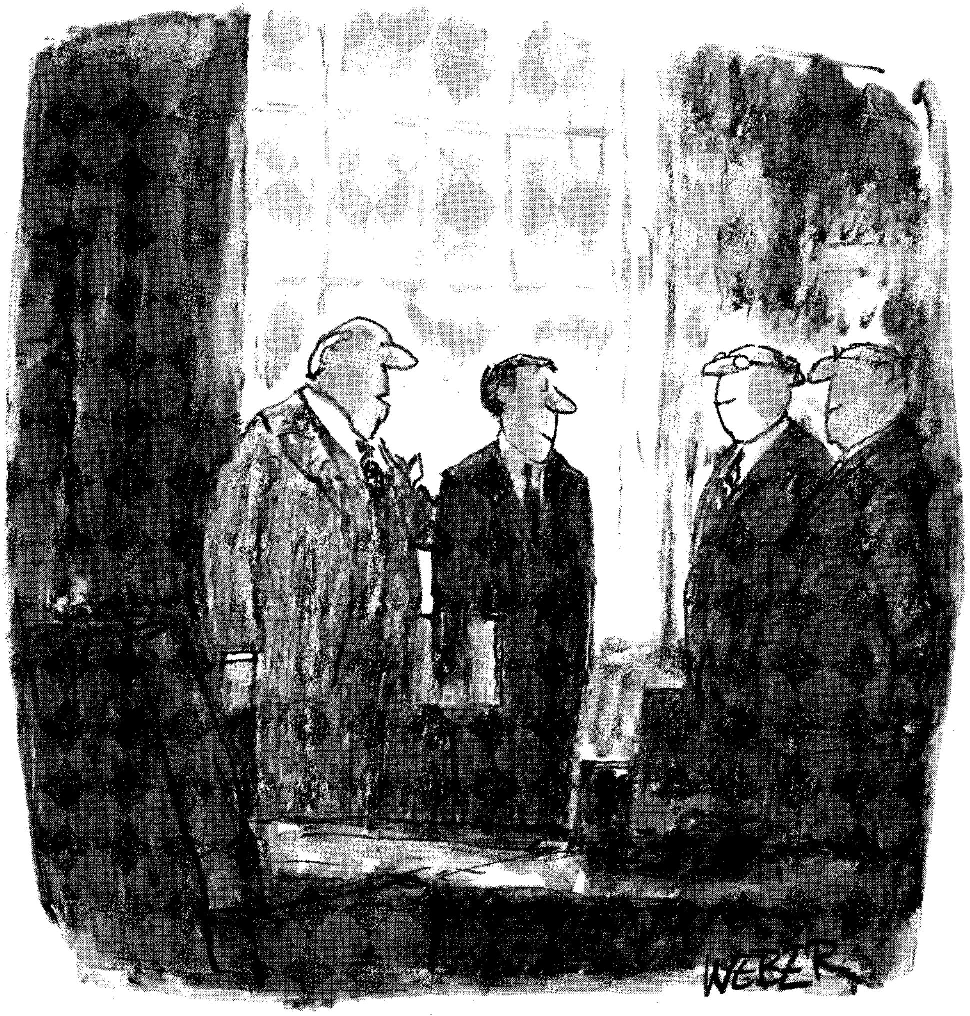
We asked if the Asian girls were students.

"Yes, bless them," our informant said happily. "Thirty-six of them, graduate students and undergraduates, came down today from South Hadley by bus. They brought their party clothes with them and changed here. Aren't they lovely?"

Lovely and patient—like the girl in a deep-pink sari who had to explain over and over to the guests that the party had temporarily run out of champagne. "It's embarrassing," she said, sighing. "We were sure we'd ordered enough, but I think the trouble is these glasses. As you see, they're unusually deep. More champagne is on the way, we've been assured."

In any event, this temporary hitch did not dampen the party's spirits. It was the sort of occasion at which the men didn't seem cross at having to wear black tie. Everywhere were little groups talking and talking—about old times, no doubt. Among them threaded K. Shankar Bajpai, the Indian Ambassador to Washington; Natarajan Krishnan, the Indian Ambassador to the United Nations, and Mrs. Krishnan; and Mount Holyoke's president, Elizabeth T. Kennan, and several of its trustees.

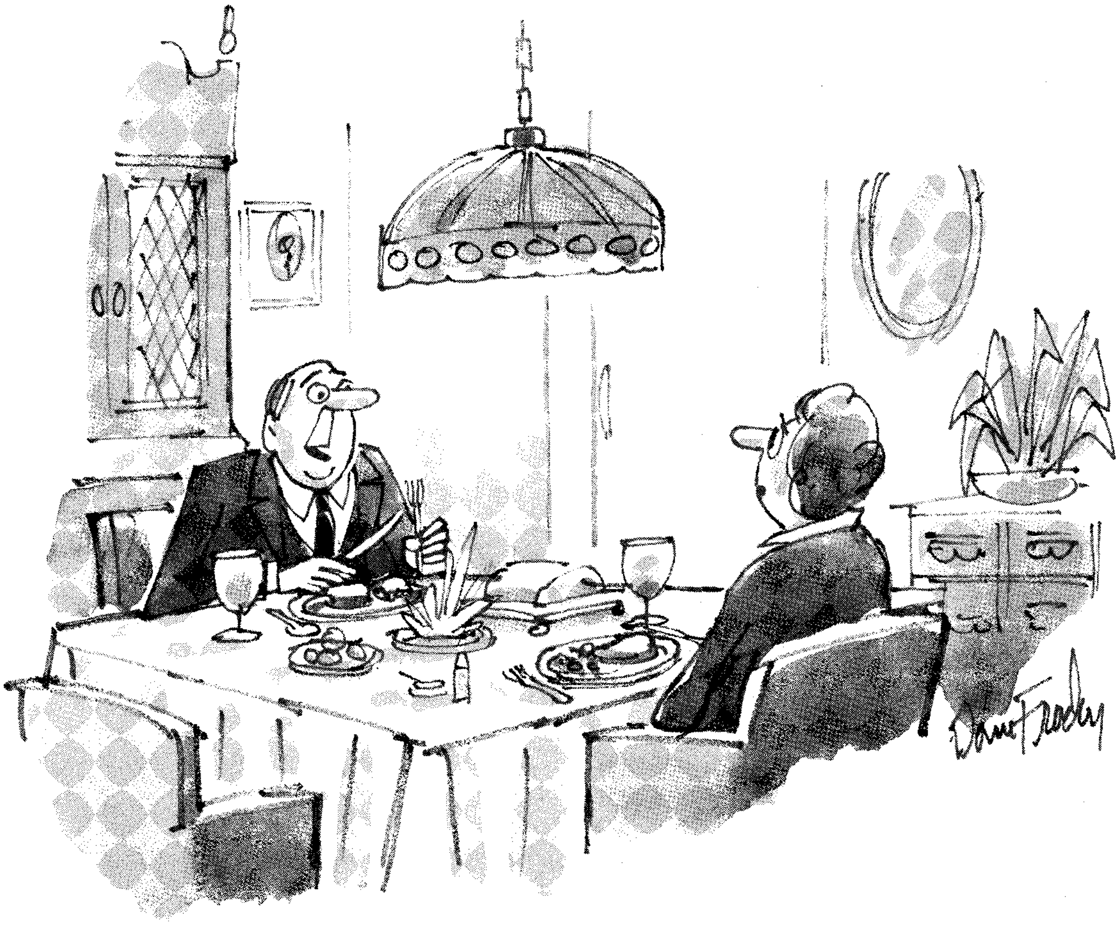
Presently, we made our way downstairs for a look at the exhibition of Akbar's India. Ranged around the walls, along with panels carrying information, were various Indian artifacts, including a pair of bronze lions' heads and a rare rug. What was most striking, however, was the paintings, chiefly Mogul miniatures—a magnificent lot of jewellike works borrowed from collections all over the place. In one corner, a television set chatted away, telling us, with colored illustrations, about the Emperor Akbar—or, as the Encyclopædia Britannica adds, Abū-ul-Fath Jalāl-ud-Dīn Muhammad Akbar, 1542-1605, which dates make him a contemporary of the first Queen Elizabeth. He built Fatehpur Sikri after his own design, and there presided over "a remarkable synthetic Mogul culture"—the Britannica again—which embraced art, architecture, gastronomy, dress, and pastimes. His empire was founded "on an understanding with the Hindu Rajputs and on respect for Hindu religion and culture;" two of his wives were Rajput princesses. He was an early ecumenicist: in his City of Victory he entertained Sunnis, Shiites, Hindus, Jains, Christians, and Parsis, all of whom freely debated their ideas of God. The Emperor's interests included not only pictorial art but calligraphy, and he owned at least twenty-four thousand books. But he couldn't read, and never learned. Books were read to him daily, and on occasion the readings were followed by music. It was a bit of a comedown to learn that Akbar, after fourteen years of life in Fatehpur Sikri, moved on to a succession of other cities.



"George Tully is a really first-rate individual, up from second-rate this past quarter."

Hardware

OUR plan to save New York—the controversial plan you've probably been hearing about, the one that involves federal subsidies for jazz clubs, and special Oregano Zones, where restaurants agreeing to serve good, cheap red wine won't pay any taxes—got an unexpected boost recently when, on our very own midtown block, a computer store closed down. Right after New Year, there opened in its place a *hardware store*. And not an Implements R We or a TooLand or a Nutty, Nutty Cy's. Barson Hardware is the name, after the man who founded the operation many years ago, Barney Rubin (B); his daughter—and now shop co-owner—Anita (A); his wife, Rose (R); and Joel, his SON. It's been around the corner on Sixth for the past quarter-century, but this month, because of lease trouble, it moved into the vacant spot on our block, right between the Harvard Club and the New York Yacht Club. "You know that computer store that was here?" David Schneiderman asked us when we went to visit. "They left all their records behind, and guess what! They weren't computerized." Barson Hardware is not computerized, either, but, because Mr. Schneiderman and his wife, who is Anita Rubin, are good at remembering things, the store didn't have to close for a single day during the four-week moving process. "If an item that a customer wanted had already been sent to the new building, we just sent a clerk over to get it," Mr. Schneiderman said. "The customer comes first at Barson Hardware." This is all a little weird, but we aren't making it up.



"Something's happening. I saw someone drinking a Manhattan today."

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What do you need? Do you need sandpaper, or sanding belts, router bits, a portable vise, heat guns for stripping paint, a first-aid kit, a respirator to protect yourself from spray-paint fumes, a respirator to protect yourself from asbestos dust, a ratchet tap wrench, a wire gauge, a vacuum vise, a chain-saw-sharpening kit, a chuck-key holder, saw blades, drills, screwdrivers (including the new torx-head models, for automotive screws), fractional drill bits, an eye loupe, an ultrasonic humidifier, two types of flame igniters, three types of immersion heaters, four varieties of corkscrews, four lint-removing devices, can openers, plant-food spikes, camp stoves, trowels, salt and pepper shakers, two brands of fizz caps, six styles of kitchen timers, "the world's strongest luggage cart," three styles of paper-towel holders, twenty-nine sizes of scissors, an egg slicer, an apple corer, an extension cord, a garlic press, night lights of varying intensity, handles and hinges from the early French to the late Danish, fourteen styles of work gloves, five types of rubber gloves, electric-heat tape (in eight different lengths) with which to wrap your pipes, multiple-outlet strips and surge suppressors, a button to put in your sockets so that your lights will flash, eleven models of light-dimmers, seventeen styles of doorbell buttons, plaques for light switches, a glue gun, aluminum-repair material, steel-repair material, a stick lubricant to open tight locks, some Chair-Loc ("It swells wood!"), doorknobs, doorknob *covers* so that your children can't use the doorknobs, two types of venetian-blind-taping kits, braided-cotton venetian-blind cord, hammers of every size, wrenches of every kind, torpedo levels, bull's-eye levels, pocket levels, combination levels, wooden combination levels, birch screwhole buttons, a deburring tool, a pin vise, a waist apron, turnbuckles, screw eyes, key chains, shower heads large enough to bathe Tribeca, sixteen types of caulk, bird tanglefoot ("Stops birds roosting"), four styles of caulking guns, sink stoppers, hose couplings, gas cans, stepladders, dollies, rubber plungers, twenty-seven types of vacuum-cleaner bags, irons, electric razors, plant-light bulbs, hair curlers, hair dryers, a Screamer ("Scare off an attacker"), insect killers, water filters, sunlamps, flexible-neck flashlights, flexible shaft drills, industrial-type tweezers, a steam-maker for the shower, locks for push-button phones, fourteen kinds of weather-stripping, a rain gauge, batteries, no-smoke ashtrays, giant scoops for bins of grain, thermoses, Soda King Super Chargers, salt crystals for melting ice, lock de-icers, artificial fireplace logs, pedometers, tally counters, changemakers (the Paragon model, the Shorty Paragon model, and the Four Barrel High Speed Changer), watering cans, bathtub appliqués, ice-cube trays, pressure-cooker sealing rings, color-coded hardwood dowels, hammocks, squeeze bottles for mustard and ketchup, welding torches, fire extinguishers, doorstops, coat hangers, "hem grips" for the bottom of shades so you won't get your fingerprints on them when you pull them down, picture lights, lights that turn on when you open doors, casters, caster cups, picture hangers, foot pumps for inflating car tires, oil cans, mallets, snips, chisels, crowbars, pry bars, barracuda bars, thirteen sizes of vise grips, a hundred and fifty sizes and tensions of springs, a smoke alarm, a wireless FM intercom, leather punches, pencil sharpeners, electric shoe polishers, an umbrella, numbers and letters for your mailbox, an eyeglass-repair kit, or a Swiss Army knife? If you need any of these things, or a lot of other things they have in the basement, you know where to go.

NOTES ON MY CONVERSATIONS

> Conversation has been [Fran] Lebowitz's lifetime work. The writing of her books, like the plastering of a wall for a fresco, is best viewed as a preparatory phase.... Instead of bemoaning Lebowitz's failure to publish, one might envy her progress. Her work is now custom-tailored, her clientele is elite. She has gone from *prêt à porter* to *haute couture.—Vanity Fair.*

YOU haven't read anything by me for some time, because I have been devoting myself to what I felt was my true art form: conversation. When I made this transition, the critics labelled me "lazy" and "a procrastinator." The fact is, I did not stop writing in order to lounge around at parties—that has been only a necessary adjunct to my work.

The moment I said my first word, I knew that talking was all I ever wanted to do, despite considerable discouragement from my family. They felt I ought to accomplish something. Yet I never found doing things satisfying. There wasn't the sense of completion I'd get from talking about doing something to the point where it couldn't be done, shouldn't be done, and nobody even wanted it to be done anymore. But had I done it, it would have been the best thing I ever did.

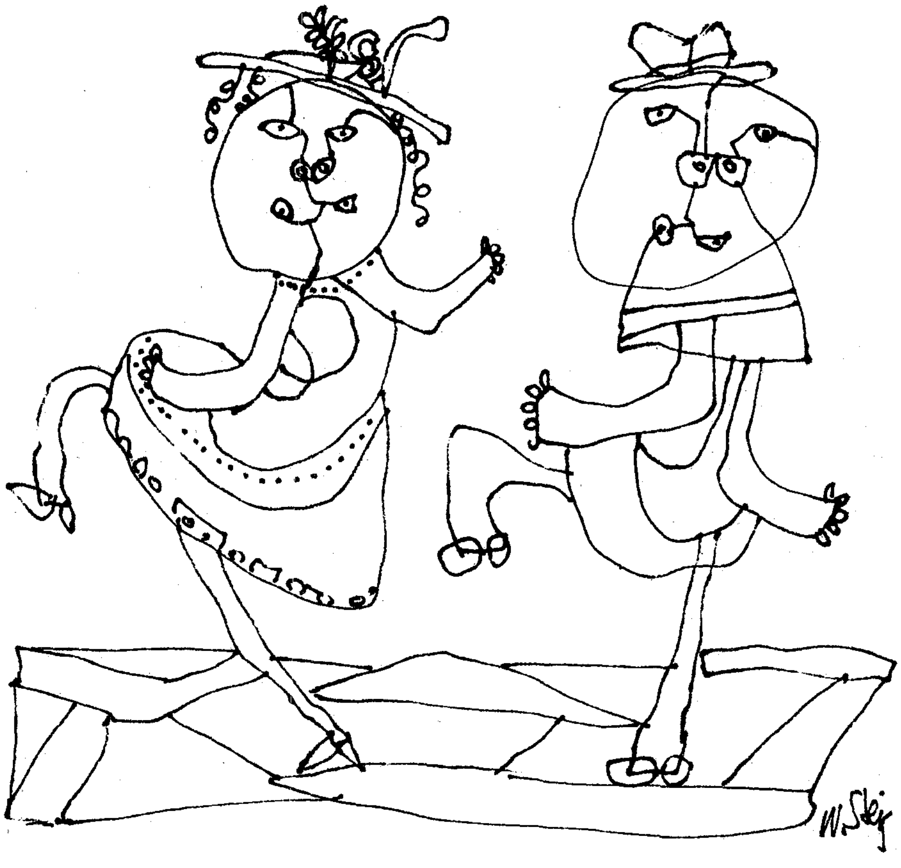
In response to demand for a retrospective, I have singled out my most famous (and infamous!) conversations. In doing so, I have had to omit numerous smaller works: kaffeeklatsches, yammers, retorts, insinuations, complaints, tipoffs, disseminations, and greetings. This is unfortunate.

My work falls into three major periods:

The Early Conversations

THE seminal influences on me were the Masters—Dr. Johnson and Oscar Wilde. Many lay people don't know how carefully Wilde worked on his aphorisms. People seem to think that being a conversationalist means you just get out of bed in the morning and open your mouth. They don't understand the preparation that's involved, not to mention the skill and patience required to make your interlocutors stick to the subject.

An example of the kinds of challenges I faced: On October 19, 1981, I met several friends at Dolores's Coffee Shop, and we engaged in lighthearted banter. Everyone asked me, "What on earth have you been doing lately—if anything?" I didn't reply. I couldn't tell them I had been carefully crafting my wit, as that would undercut the element of surprise essential for the conversation to work. I waited until the cheeseburgers were served before introducing my topic. (Note on the participants: The initials "P.F." stand for me.)



The Lindy Hop

P.F.: I've been thinking . . . about death.

T.D.: Thanks a lot—you just ruined my lunch.

P.F.: Perhaps if you simply think of death as annihilation your appetite will return.

L.B.: Can't we talk about something else?

P.F.: No!

(A critical note: During this time, I was studying Wilde's techniques for keeping his listeners on the track, and developing a few of my own.)

S.E.: Hey, has anybody seen Jeff recently? He was supposed—

P.F.: (*cutting him off*): Doesn't anybody want to hear what I have to say?

Everyone (*resignedly*): O.K.

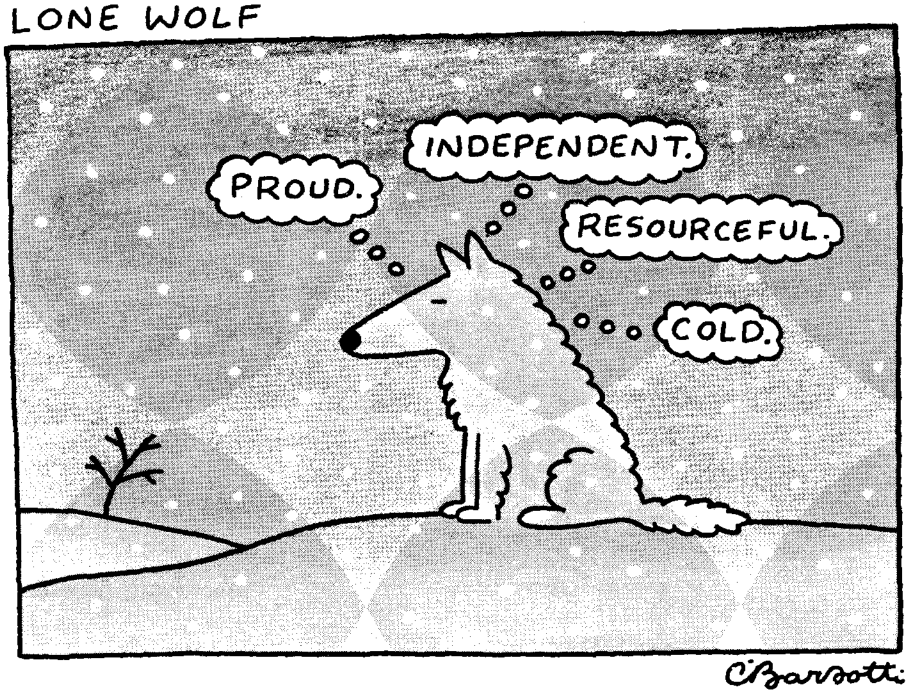
P.F.: Well, forget it—I've decided not to tell you.

My reputation as a conversationalist really began to be established when I moved from coffee shops to cocktail parties. It was there that I began to experiment with material and develop techniques. In particular, the technique of cornering enabled me to extend the duration of small talk beyond anything previously known. It has been noted by critics that my small talk was about duration itself.

During what I now refer to as my "representational" period, T.D. would often ask me what exactly it was I brought to the art of conversation. Traditionally, the immortal conversationalists came to talk from other disciplines—Northcote from painting, Socrates from philosophy, Heine from poetry. I began to feel that this was what was responsible for the constant intrusion of subject matter into their speech.

Middle Works

MORE and more, I challenged the assumption that I shouldn't speak unless I had something to say. Words themselves were becoming of less interest to me than pure sound. I was fascinated by the possibilities of



yelling, whispering, and changing my accent midsentence. Also, the visual effects, such as rolling my eyes, drumming my fingers, and grinning inappropriately.

I was able to experiment with these ideas in 1982, when I gave over two hundred interviews, culminating in EXCLUSIVE SELF-INTERVIEW, excerpted here:

> You ask if there's any recurring theme in my work. Well, CONVERSATION #87 was, on the surface, a simple story about dinner at Shirley's house but was actually about not having been invited to Roger's for some time. Then, around CONVERSATION #157, Roger pointed out that I was still talking about the same thing. So, yes, there are recurring themes in my work. But, to return to your first question. You asked if I don't feel my conversations should be a two-way street. No, I don't. I don't believe in art by committee. Life and art? There is no separation. Everything—my most recent trip, along with any others I have ever taken, all the facts in the most recent issue of *Newsweek*, Thursday night's dinner, as well as its effect on my digestion, the entire plot of the last movie I saw—everything becomes part of my conversation. What's the most interesting thing I've ever said? Impossible to answer. Like all conversationalists, I am always most in love with what I am saying at the moment.

The big breakthrough in my style came in 1983. Until then, I had always carefully planned out what I was going to say in advance. What might happen if I simply responded on the spot to what people were saying? The results of these experiments in form surprised even me. An example, from a telephone conversation in late 1984:

Shirley: Hello?
P.F.: (*silence*)
Shirley: HELLO?
P.F.: (*very long silence*)

At this point in the conversation, Shirley slammed down the receiver. I had never gotten this effect out of her before.

Improvisation led me to question the role my friends were playing in my conversations, which I felt was much too great. I became interested in the idea of using non-friends—people who were no longer speaking to me, strangers, inanimate objects.

My Late Period

By March 3, 1985, the cocktail party had become a moribund form—an exchange of anecdotes, business cards, lunch dates. Shallow gestures, devoid of meaning. People felt that when I walked toward them they were about to make a connection. No—I wanted to bring them face to face with something or other. (But what? I never could decide.)

The listener had become passive. Telephone receivers were placed down on kitchen counters while listeners made trips to the refrigerator or thumbed through magazines. In my apartment lobby, they'd continue to get their mail, with only an occasional "Mm-hmm. . . . Mm-hmm." I didn't feel like popping one of my aphorisms after all this mumbling!

In August, the whole Street Talking Movement was coming to a boil. I was one of the ones who felt that the talk going on inside restaurants ("Check, please"), office-building elevators ("Seventeenth floor, please"), as well as hotels and theatre lobbies, had lost its vitality. Outside, it was all new and experimental. I no longer wanted to talk to people. I wanted to talk at them.

Although I felt that my Street Talking should be primarily an urban phenomenon, I did once yell at a combine on the edge of a wheat field in Saskatchewan.

When I went back indoors in October, I was attacked by the critics. I felt I had exhausted the rant and rave, especially in STREET-CORNER CONVERSATION WITH PASSING CARS. I needed fresh forms. I was dying to work with the toast, the waffle, and the quibble. And in order to do so, it was imperative that I once again sit down at the dinner table.

At this point, I would like to say something about critics. I have been accused by critics of "dominating the conversation," of "not allowing anyone else to get a word in edgewise." The most annoying thing about all this criticism is it makes me forget what it was I wanted to say. . . .

This morning, I started putting my wit in code. A conversationalist can't be too free with his/her best lines. Give a seemingly off-the-cuff recital of one and the next thing you know, it's on every bumper sticker and T-shirt. That aphorism may have been as much as one month in the making, and meanwhile I haven't gotten anything for my work.

Then, at lunch, I discovered I possess that indefinable but unmistakable something known as Presence. This has had its effect on my style, as I no longer need to enter the conversation at all. In fact, talking doesn't seem enough anymore. Now I plan to explore the other art forms—for example, having my picture taken.

—Polly Frost

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The loveliest spot on St. John's, Antigua is probably Buccaneer Cove, a semi-secluded beach where you can eat grilled lobster, listen to a rousing band and have your hair.—*Clayton (Mo.) Citizen Journal.*

Put us down for the month of February.

THE AUCTION

NOTICE of the auction appeared out of the blue on a morning early in October. There were square paper signs nailed to a box elder and the gatepost:

FARM AUCTION, NOVEMBER 16
EVERYTHING MUST GO.
CASH ON DAY OF SALE.

It was just daylight when Dana Ingles looked out of the little window of the farm's tenant house beside his bed and saw the notices. Somebody had come onto the half-deserted farm during the night, had crept up the lane and fastened the signs to the tree and the gatepost. As usual, he told himself, he had failed to make a move in time.

He went back to bed with a cup of persimmon beer. He must not get into a panic over the signs or even over the auction itself. They had to get out of here, that was all—find another place.

He and his little girl had been living for a winter and two summers on this old farm in northern Virginia. The farmer who owned the place had died—when was it?—toward the end of the past winter. There was ice on everything at the time. The police had come to him and asked if he could go on feeding the cattle for the rest of the winter. He had readily agreed, so as to keep this house. And now, it being fall, almost winter again, he should have realized that there was no more hay for feed and the herd could not be left to starve. Something would have to be done, by whoever was concerned. How silly he was not to have foreseen that probate was probably over and a sale might have to be held.

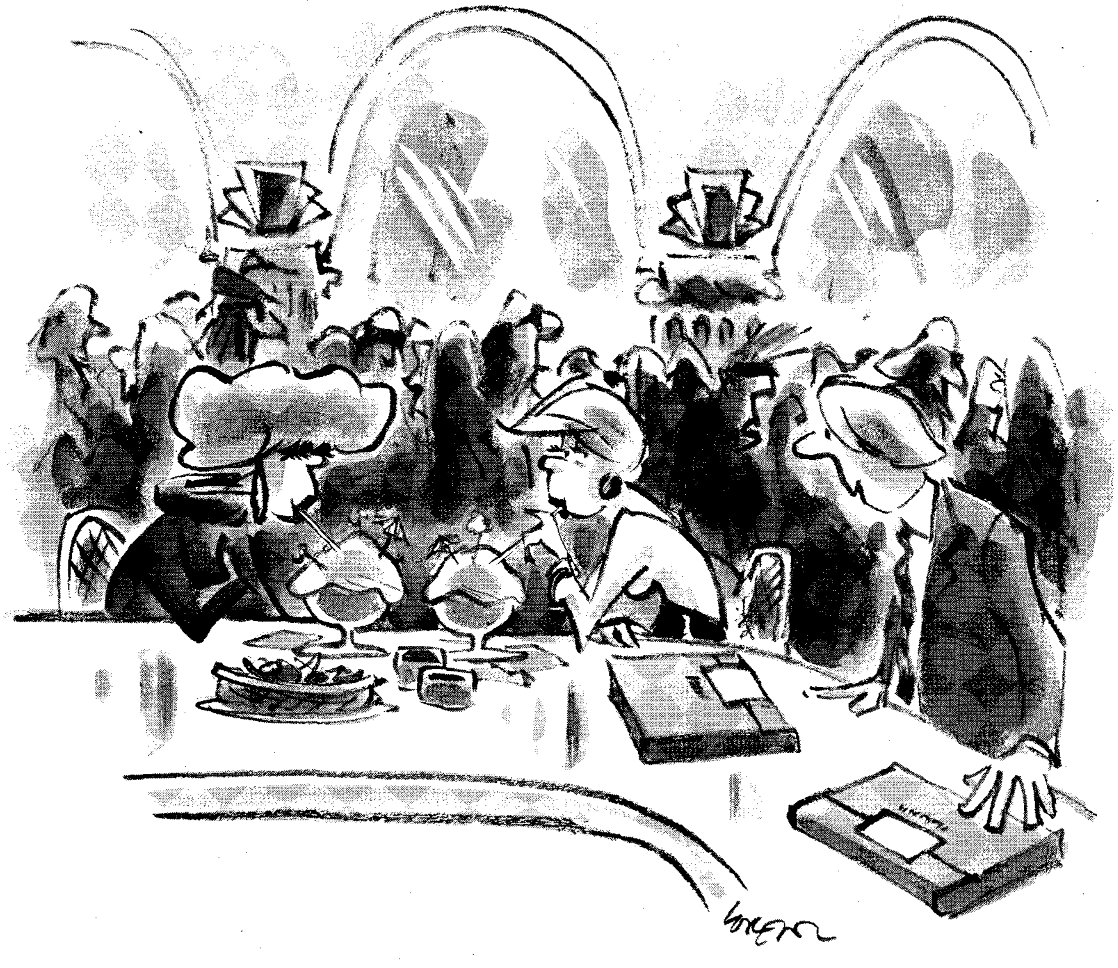
Shivering, he looked around at the log walls and the familiar limestone floor of the tenant house. The little mullioned windows, with their zany cracks and their cobwebs. Where could he take his child when no place would be as deserted and safe as this? Here summer provided a wealth of food to be gathered from the farmer's perennial garden and from the little orchard. A nearby spring brought clear water from under the Blue Ridge Mountains.

Psychiatrists, before he escaped them, had warned him not to take an extreme viewpoint, either of fear or of hope. And years ago, when he was a boy and distraught, his father had instructed him to plod through the Rosary. Turn to bell, book, and candle afresh. But first one had to make an act of contrition. What should he confess to? What had he done wrong, to be turned out into the world again with no money or possessions? Maybe, like Job, he had sinned by forgetting to give thanks for every little thing in this strange place. For the Queen Anne's lace, for instance, now in brown cups for winter soup. Thanks for his own and his little girl's health. For exile itself, exile to keep them safe from the family, the trite world of New Orleans with its cozy explanations.

As a boy, he had been forced to live on his aged father's Mississippi plantation, to rub the old man to sleep, to read him interminable novels aloud. But there was no connection between that lengthy imprisonment and the life that he and his little girl lived now, communing with nature and walking the woods, rid of material thoughts. His father was old and half crazy, but he, the son, was young and lived in the present, supple and compassionate. And even-tempered, for the most part.

And since he did live in the present, he must figure out how to win the ear of another local landlord. Maybe get a county paper and look at the help-wanted section. If and when he found a landlord, his lines should go something like this: I am an experienced farmhand. I come cheap, but I must have a house for myself and my nine-year-old daughter.

He reassured himself all over again that stealing his own child was not on his list of wrongdoings. Her mother had schizophrenia, the worst kind. In the daughter's



"How about that! We're both carrying the same de-luxe executive personal-management portfolio."

new brain, the genes were there, like firecrackers, ready to go off. This child must have a serene life of love and reassurance, without any kind of stress. She must be brought up, at least until she was twelve, by a man of judgment, eminently sane. He was certainly the former. And as to the question of sanity, he could manage: he kept a calendar, never failing to mark off today and take a look at tomorrow. If the family paid some psychiatrist to chase them down—say one breezed in here from Foggy Bottom—Dana Ingles would never appear rattled. He would be well oriented as to time and place: it's the seventh of October; you go left at Point of Rocks to Washington, D.C. (you probably came that way); right goes south and deeper into Virginia.

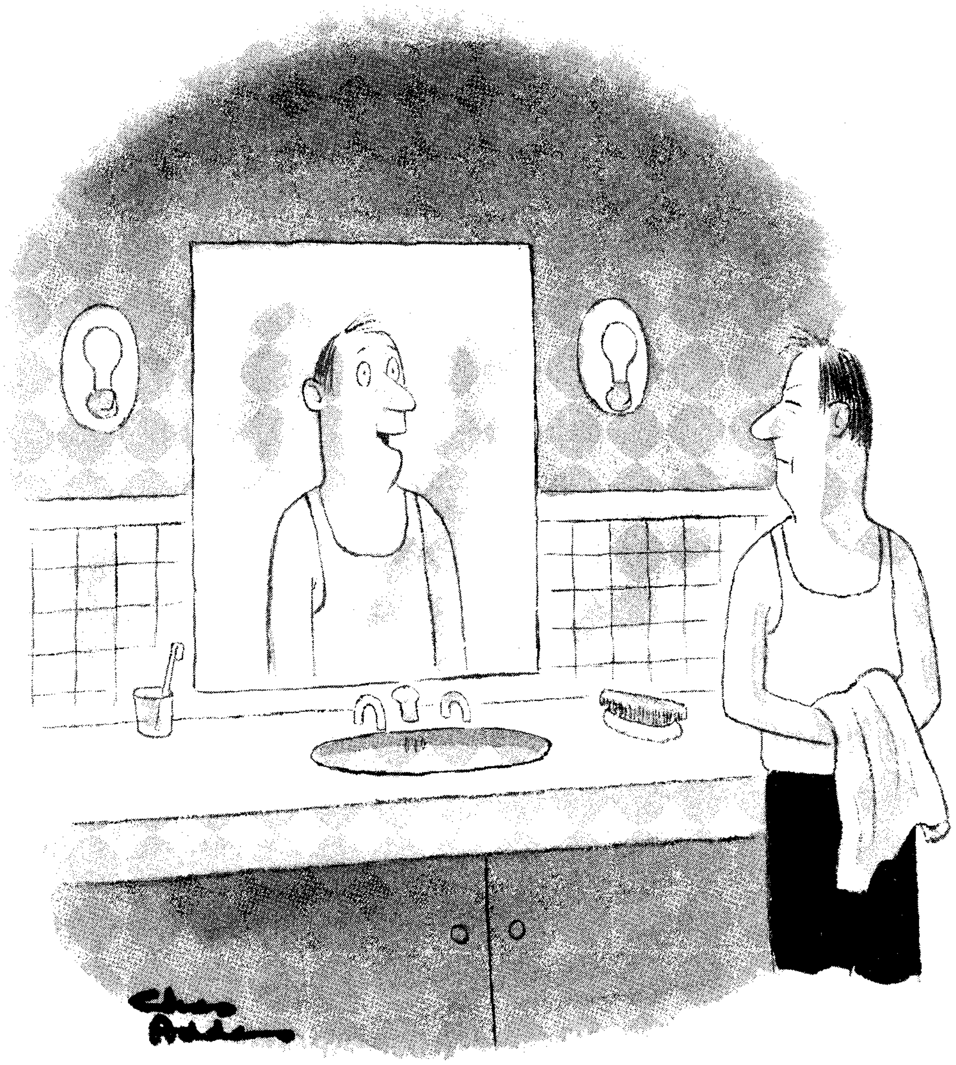
He started up from the bed to look at his little girl. Laura was already dressed in her white corduroy overalls, given to her by one of the humanitarians who beat the bushes of northern Virginia looking for the needy. The child must have noticed the auction signs (she was a compulsive reader), but as his self-appointed protector she probably wouldn't let on. The sight of her now, small-mouthed and fine-haired, putting on her sneakers, gave him calm, a feeling that they would be spared for each other and the future. Spared from what? From the agony of separation? From this new quandary about where to go, what to do, before people swarmed in here, gawking, to bid for these very premises? Yes—to back up a bit—he was sure he was benefitting her with this ascetic life. Later on, when she came into her family money, she would be dieted and chaste. Right now (he narrowed the sights of his mind), she was washing her face from a pan of water they had pumped from the well last night.

"Did you read the auction signs?" he said. "Do you know what an auction is?" He wanted her to answer, to offer him the shelter of words from the hauntedness of the moment.

She did not look up at him or directly answer the question. "Where are we going?" she asked.

No need for alarm; she didn't mean eventually, she meant now. She must have noticed his putting on his belt, which he didn't usually bother with.

"Just to get a paper. To the store to get a paper. See if somebody wants a man to work. This place is going to be sold."



"Have a nice day."

Laura had bitten into an apple, and she nodded matter-of-factly. When she could swallow the bite, she began humming—a little self-consciously, maybe. Arias from opera were just a fraction of the many things he had taught her. She could recite from Carroll and Milne, and "Charlotte's Web;" she knew the Rosary, of course, and even had a notebook of leaves and flowers that they had classified from an old botanical text. Still, she didn't know enough. She didn't know the world existed, did she? The world with its arrows. What with all his drinking and secret depression, her mother's illness, he sometimes thought he ought to kill her early rather than let her grow up into these sufferings. But she was a sacred child of God, and although there were plenty of hills and rocks around he had received no command about this little Isaac.

The pockets of his old jacket still held a few quarters. He had filched these coins from the dead farmer's sugar bowl, together with some Percodan and clean socks, before the sheriff sealed the farmhouse last winter. There was plenty of money to get a paper and buy an orange or two. Wild rose hips served the purpose, too, but an orange would be a surprise for this underprivileged child. He laughed aloud at the word.

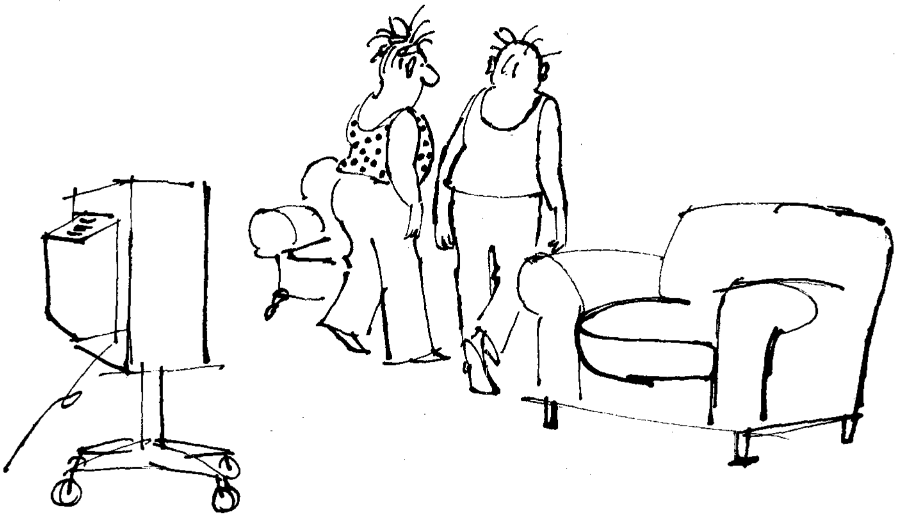
THERE were two ways to get to the country store, with its canned soup and boxed doughnuts and chicken feed. One was by way of the farm lane, where they would probably see more of the auction notices and the highway marker for Point of Rocks (white on green, government art) with the forbidding arrow: "To WASHINGTON, D.C." The other way would take them across the railroad tracks and a timothy field belonging to the thoroughbred farm next door.

Shouldn't one keep track of every little happening in one's life, no matter how trivial? He felt as if he had been in a trance, or sleepwalking, because they had gotten to the fancy cedar fence of the horse farm, which they had to snake under, before he even realized that they had started out. What had happened to the minute-by-minute moves: his putting on his boots and lacing them up, finding Laura's wool cap, going out of the tenant house and shutting the door? All blanked out now, except maybe in his subconscious.

He put the big child on his shoulders so that her ankles would not get studded with burdock. From up there she could see the highway traffic that they could already hear—cars and trucks speeding so fast the air whined. A deer path, barely visible as a thinning of the hay stubble, led to a windbreak of *Rosa rugosa*, behind which they could disappear from the gaze of a Negro man in a nearby paddock who was lunging a horse on a red-and-gold lead rope. Laura twisted around backward to watch the horse, her movements rearranging her father's spine.

The Blue Ridge air, still not cold, was invigorating to breathe. Now was the time, he told himself, to put all muddleheadedness behind him. Sort things out for good. First, find an employer, move into some other tenant house, get used to the contours of new fields, new limestone outcroppings that would make faces from the past when he was drunk. Only he mustn't drink. He must definitely stop drinking. Dear God, he prayed, give me the strength to stop drinking. That is, once we find a sanctuary. Not that he drank that much. Damn these contradictions. But really, the beer he made couldn't run even to ten per cent.

Look here, he said to himself, still striding along toward the store, let's use some common sense. A reading of the law, if you please. As a bona-fide tenant, left behind by the farmer's death, he would certainly be given a reasonable time to find another place. And, when it was found, he would never again have another drink or take beauty and solitude for granted. He would spend time on his knees, thanking God that they were not trapped into heading home and so-called civilization.



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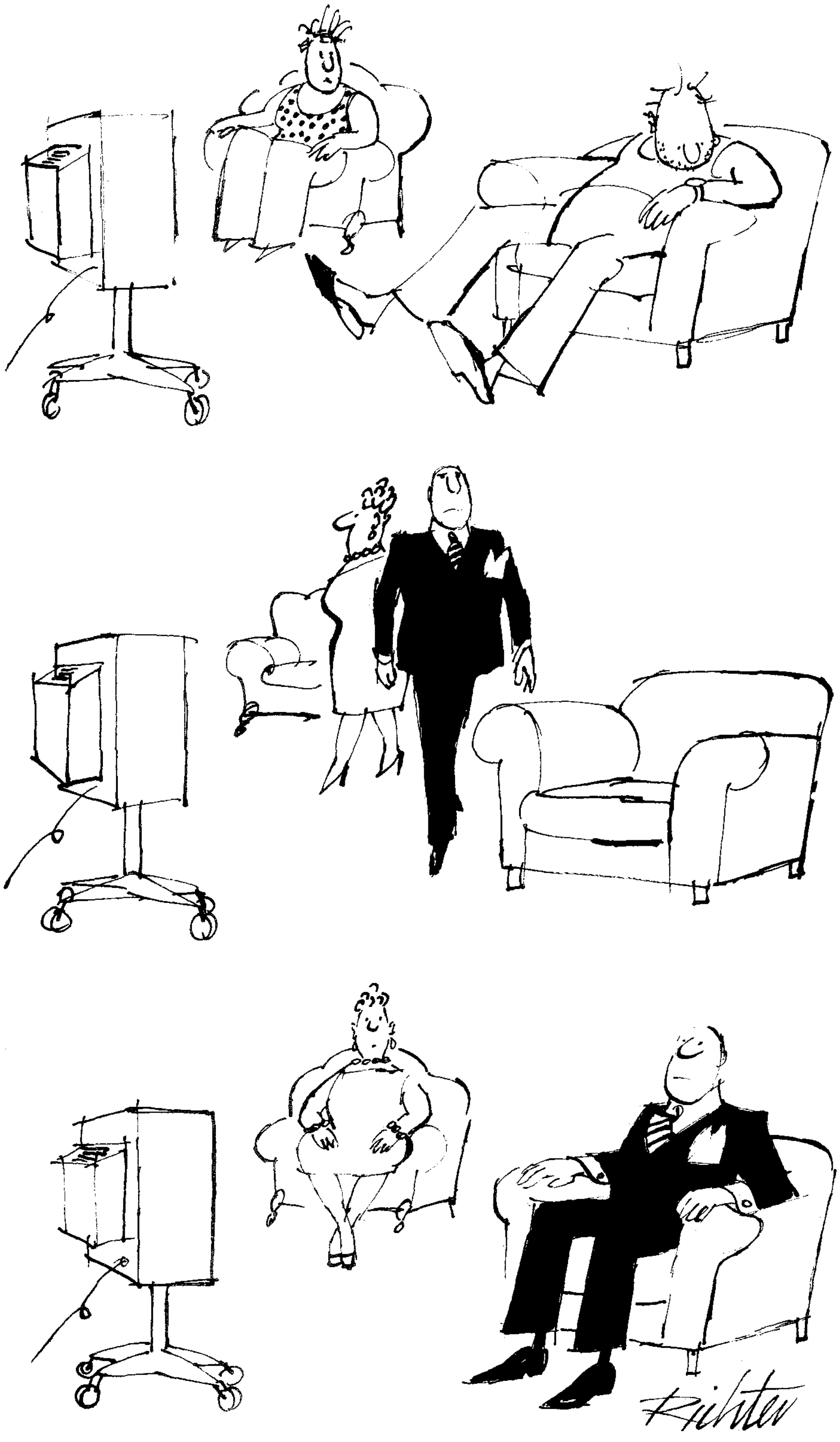
Yet how long could this last, this idyllic part of their lives? As Laura grew older, wouldn't their situation become more and more implausible? All he had in the way of identification was the cards from a wallet he'd picked up in Union Station more than two years ago, naming him as one Gregory Soiro, aged thirty-three, and a District driver's license with a photograph and an address on Washington's Gold Coast. Mr. Soiro didn't have a pale face or a receding hairline, like his, and the eyes didn't have his spooked look. Laura no doubt examined the license when he was asleep, but she asked no questions that might embarrass him, such as "Am I Miss Laura Soiro? You ask Our Lady to bless Nursie and Grandmama, so are they dead?" Meaning, of course, Who am I? So far, she had never asked any of these questions. So far, she had not even hinted that she would like to hear the other part of the story.

Right now, he thought, I ought to be figuring out how to avoid this haughty Negro on the way back from the store. He looked like just the type to win points by mentioning a vagrant trespassing. Or maybe he knows we're from the farm. Laura was tugging at his arms, wanting to be set on her own feet to cross the highway. Once she was down, she allowed him to hold her hand.

As they neared the little country store, there were sounds of laughing and screaming. Today must be the apple pickers' payday. Indeed, there was the battered blue school bus the pickers rode. They were known locally as the Growers' Guests. Judging by the cadences he could hear, these pickers were mostly Haitian. Tonight they would be given a dance and allowed to drink. Their morale was an important factor in the production apparatus of northern Virginia.

As they went forward and joined the throng at the store, he thought Laura had stumbled, but she had



"Ladies and gentlemen, the President of the United States."

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merely stooped over suddenly to retrieve a pacifier from the ground. Wiping the dirt off on her pants, she popped it back into the waiting mouth of a black baby. Sucking began and the baby's eyes softened with pleasurable relief. Girls Laura's age, conspicuously clean, chased each other on and off the sagging porch of the store, trading their Little Debbie cakes and giggling. There was a noticeable absence of adolescent turmoil. He wondered at them all—how had it happened that the pickers' sense of self had not been whittled down and lost in the confusion of the late twentieth century?

Laura wanted to stay outside and play with the babies, so he entered the store alone. The crew boss, white, was using his pocket calculator to check and pay each picker's bill. This man looked coarse and hostile. Except for him, there seemed in the crowd no anxiety or rancor. Well, why should there be? These people would all be at their camp tonight with their wages paid and their passage to the next camp guaranteed. As soon as the last box of apples was onto a truck, they would be moving on, with money.

It is I who face a hopeless situation, he thought, looking about at the shelves of fuses, clothespins, dog food, and fluffy bread. I would be only too glad to pick apples, yet I do not qualify. I am not packaged labor. It felt to him as if he had been plodding forever toward this insignificant moment at this clumsy little store. And there was not just himself to consider. He was carrying, as if she were ballast, the hope and flower of his family, to save her. To save her from what? He could not escape his own cross-questioning. From the Sacred Heart of Jesus Academy, from computers, from Fat Tuesday—New Orleans' world. From whatever stress might unlock her mother's schizophrenia into her innocent brain. Then the critical question: How much of this whole effort was for saving himself? The question that could never be answered. Fathers, if you steal your child, be prepared for remorse.

The newspaper rack held the Richmond *Times-Dispatch* and the local *Dominion Guardian*, the latter twenty cents. Haitians were bumping into him now in a sudden flurry of buying. He moved his feet toward the cash register, holding the local paper to his chest, defensively. On a television set at the back of the store, a smiling, youngish woman spoke of her teeth slipping out of her mouth for want of a certain preparation. Next a fast car flashed along a narrow mountain road with the name of the dealer and the 800 number below it on the screen. He paid his twenty cents and he was finally free to go out of the screened door that was plastered with tin advertising strips.

He found Laura mingling with the crowd, smiling and using sign language. Somebody had given her a Popsicle—loaded with pathogens, probably. He snatched it out of her hand and threw it into the trash barrel. "Let's get going."

UP for auction. They were up for auction, too, he and this reckless child, this angel who chose to visit with savages. And there might be no bidder.

"You will have to excuse my temper in throwing that Popsicle away," he began. "You can't count on immunity to things you haven't been exposed to."

He dared look down at her. Strangely enough, she was smiling. If she had thrown it away herself, she said, it would have hurt the people's feelings.

Oh, yes. Why did she always agree with him? It wasn't healthy. She had no wishes or strong ideas of her own and yet she was prematurely growing breasts. Just whatever people wanted. Would she grow up protecting every man she met?

As they walked along, a space seemed to invade his mind, giving a feeling of peace. There might be nothing in the paper, yet somehow things were going to be all right; they would have a home. It was more than a premonition. Something had been decided overhead. Several times before in his life, he had had this experience—that what lay ominous in the future became, unexpectedly, all settled and in the past. A slight adjustment in time that shifted event? All he had to do, on these occasions, was to wait for the card to fall out of the celestial deck.

They took the same path back across the horse farm. The black man was still there in the paddock, now without the horse. And he was moving toward them. God. Should they turn around and go the other way? The man raised his arm in a gesture of greeting. He looked friendly as he approached. His voice carried some of the familiar tones of Mississippi, or was it Alabama? If they would kindly step over to the back veranda of the stone house, he said, pointing out the direction, the boss man had a question.

Laura pulled away excitedly. She began to skip and dance ahead in the way they were asked to go. They passed a pond with swans and weeping willows that were keeping their leaves into fall. The house was of the Federal period, the stones gem-cut, and the entire back was covered with wisteria, the vine hung now with velvet pods.

IN THE END WE ARE ALL LIGHT

I love how old men carry purses for their wives,
those stiff light-beige or navy wedge-shaped bags
that match the women's pumps,
with small gold clasps that click open and shut.
These men drowse off in doctors' waiting rooms,
the bags perched in their laps like big tame birds
too worn to flap away. Within, the wives slowly undress,
put on the thin white robes, consult, come out
and wake the husbands dreaming openmouthed.

And when they both rise up
to take their constitutional,
walk up and down the block, her arms are free as air,
his right hand dangles down.

So I, desiring to shed this skin
for some light silken one,
will tell my husband, "Here, hold this,"
and watch him amble off among the shining
cans of motor oil, my leather bag
slung over his massive shoulder bone,
so prettily slender-waisted, so forgiving of the ways
we hold each other down, that watching him
I see how men love women, and women men,
and how the burden of the other comes to be
light as a feather blown, more quickly vanishing.

—LIZ ROSENBERG

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On the porch, an elderly man doffed a porkpie hat and waved them forward. He wore a tweed hunting jacket with leather elbows, and had a drinker's face, filled with little red hills of flesh. The Virginian extended his soft, manicured hand and made a playful bow to Laura. His attitude seemed painfully condescending.

"The farm next over," he began. "Do I understand you're the tenant? That was my understanding from the help, that you're the tenant."

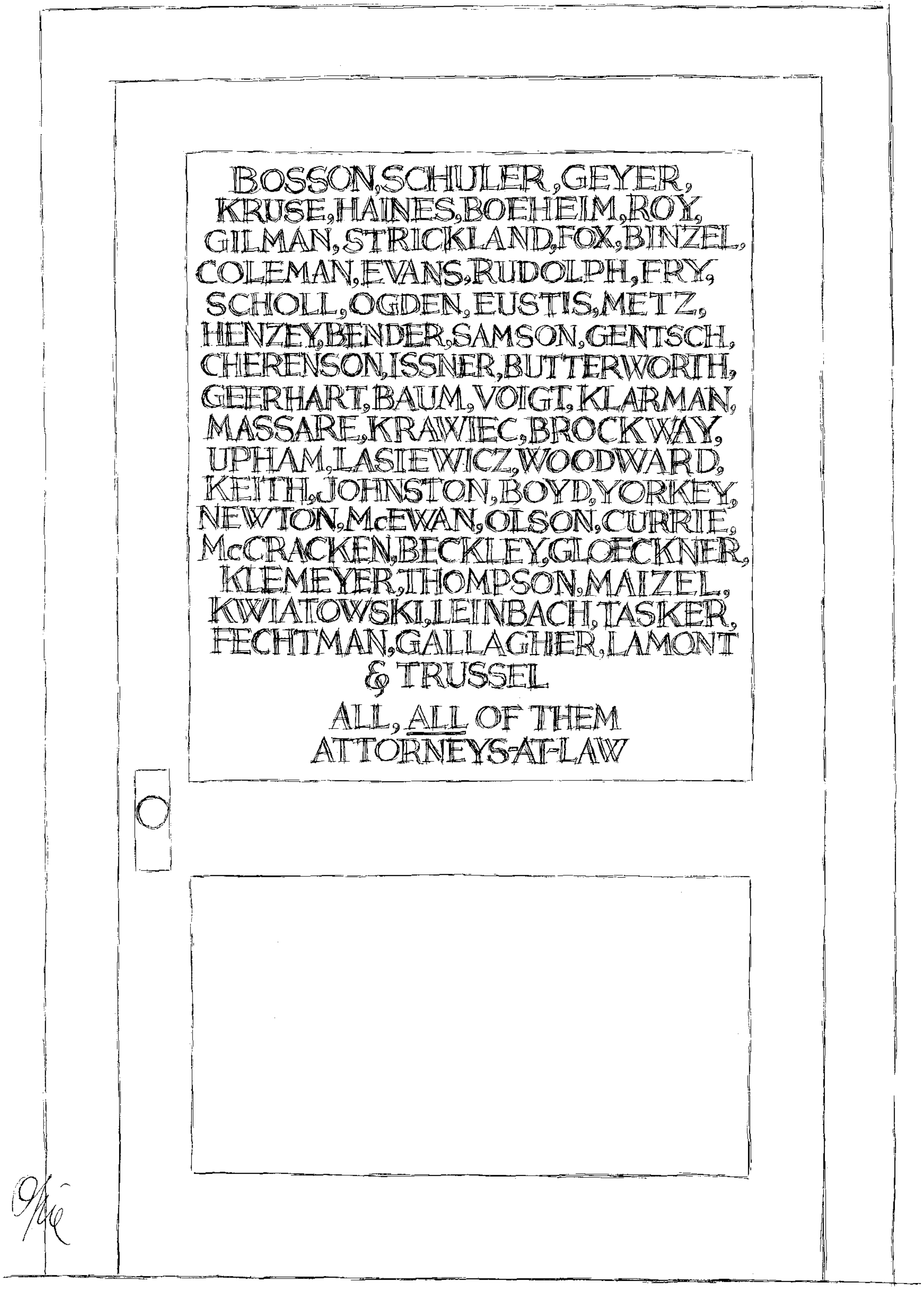
The man explained that he was going to bid in the coming auction. For the whole place. It wasn't worth much, he said, but he couldn't risk a Korean orphanage or some kind of Buddhist outfit coming in. There was no length that foreigners wouldn't go to get hold of Virginia acreage.

Anne Burgess

The gentleman was a talker, and there was no place to interrupt. "The old farmer, God rest his soul, he wasn't much of a manager. I say he wasn't so great as a manager. There are broken parts and pieces of metal all over the grounds, and those old junk machines. If you want to stay on, you can begin by cleaning up. When you get a load together, I'll send you over a flatbed to go to the county landfill. Just tell my man whenever you get a load."

The Virginian disappeared into the house. Then he took their acceptance for granted? But before they could go, the old man came back with a corduroy doll held aloft. The doll had blunt feet and a blunt head. Pink contrasted with blue. No eyes. He handed it to Laura. "Take it, sweetie. Love it. Take it to bed with you." Cattle were no good, he told her father, but as long as horses had to eat, oats and timothy paid. He could get his new acres plowed and disked up before the ground froze.

Although they followed the same


BOSSON, SCHULER, GEYER,
KRUSE, HAINES, BOEHEIM, ROY,
GILMAN, STRICKLAND, FOX, BINZEL,
COLEMAN, EVANS, RUDOLPH, FRY,
SCHOLL, OGDEN, EUSTIS, METZ,
HENZEY, BENDER, SAMSON, GENTSCH,
CHERENSON, ISSNER, BUTTERWORTH,
GEERHART, BAUM, VOIGT, KLARMAN,
MASSARE, KRAWIEC, BROCKWAY,
UPHAM, LASIEWICZ, WOODWARD,
KEITH, JOHNSTON, BOYD, YORKEY,
NEWTON, McEWAN, OLSON, CURRIE,
McCRACKEN, BECKLEY, GLOECKNER,
KLEMEYER, THOMPSON, MAIZEL,
KWIATOWSKI, LEINBACH, TASKER,
FECHTMAN, GALLAGHER, LAMONT
& TRUSSEL
ALL, ALL OF THEM
ATTORNEYS-AT-LAW

path back to the tenant house, going under the cedar fence, over the train track with its discarded crossties thrown helter-skelter on either side of the rails, Dana Ingles was startled by the sight of an old apple tree that popped up directly ahead of their footsteps. It was loaded with green-and-red fruit, fit for the Garden of Eden. The idea of that impostor giving Laura a cheap doll, then making offensive recommendations.

"Laura, did you see this tree a while ago? When we were going to the store?"

"Sure," the child answered. "You've been saying all along we've got to pick it."

Well, another amazing blessing. Minor compared with the tenant house, of course, and not really amazing, since it had been there all the time. Still.

"You see, baby, are you listening? We have to be thankful for the most trivial things. Look at that red sumac over yonder, burgundy plumes. Locusts for firewood."

She didn't get it, or maybe she did and just didn't say anything. And to get down to cases, disputing any chance of divine intervention, what could be more logical than that a landed man would want to be more landed, and would hail the first pauper that went by to do his bidding? Rather than send around to the farmer's front lane and then have all the trouble of approaching me in the tenant house to tackle me for labor.

They were nearly home now, and a drink was certainly called for. Tomorrow would be time enough to gather the autumn apples. But hell, Laura had already sat down under the tree and was sorting the good ones from the bad ones. She was all for getting things done. The saffron leaves of the black-walnut tree by the cabin intruded upon his tiredness.

"Why don't we call it a day?" he said. "You can read ahead in 'Black Beauty' while I take a little rest." An old copy of the book had turned up in a trash can at the barn.

She jumped up from the apples and ran into the house. In her preoccupation with the troubles of Black Beauty, she wouldn't notice he had to have a drink. How was Black Beauty doing? She had sat down in the doorway and was leafing through the book, trying to find her place.

The persimmon beer tasted weak after all the strain of the day. With whatever the Virginian paid him, he would go to the liquor store and get something a little faster-working, not lose so much time trying to rest. He hated to think how Francis Thompson put it: “I said to dawn, Be sudden; to eve, Be soon.” When you have a child to care for, you should be conscious continuously day and night. At least easy to awaken. Cool air blew in from the door.

What would he say to the machine presences he had known for so long, looming up in brokenness and rust? A combine, a front-end loader, an abandoned Cub tractor. It would be uncongenial trying to frame words that would notify these things, as tactfully as possible, that they were no longer wanted. Instead of hauling them to the landfill and dropping them, one by one, into a grave of clay, he would investigate a junk yard he had heard of up in Pennsylvania, see if it wanted them. He had a fuzzy link with the combine. Fretting over his father's redemption, he had somehow associated a blue light reflected in a corner of its windshield with success, with his father's being received hospitably in Heaven. Silly icon. It had to go, too, and that light probably just originated at a distant farm, coming on at first dark and going off at daylight. Certainly it was no signal from anywhere that all was well with any particular man.

He got up in order to cook some dried asparagus for supper. Laura must have finished her book. She had put it on the table with the paper. Now she was twisting her fine, straight hair and looking pleased about something. She had built up the fire so that the flames were just under the cooking rack in the fireplace.

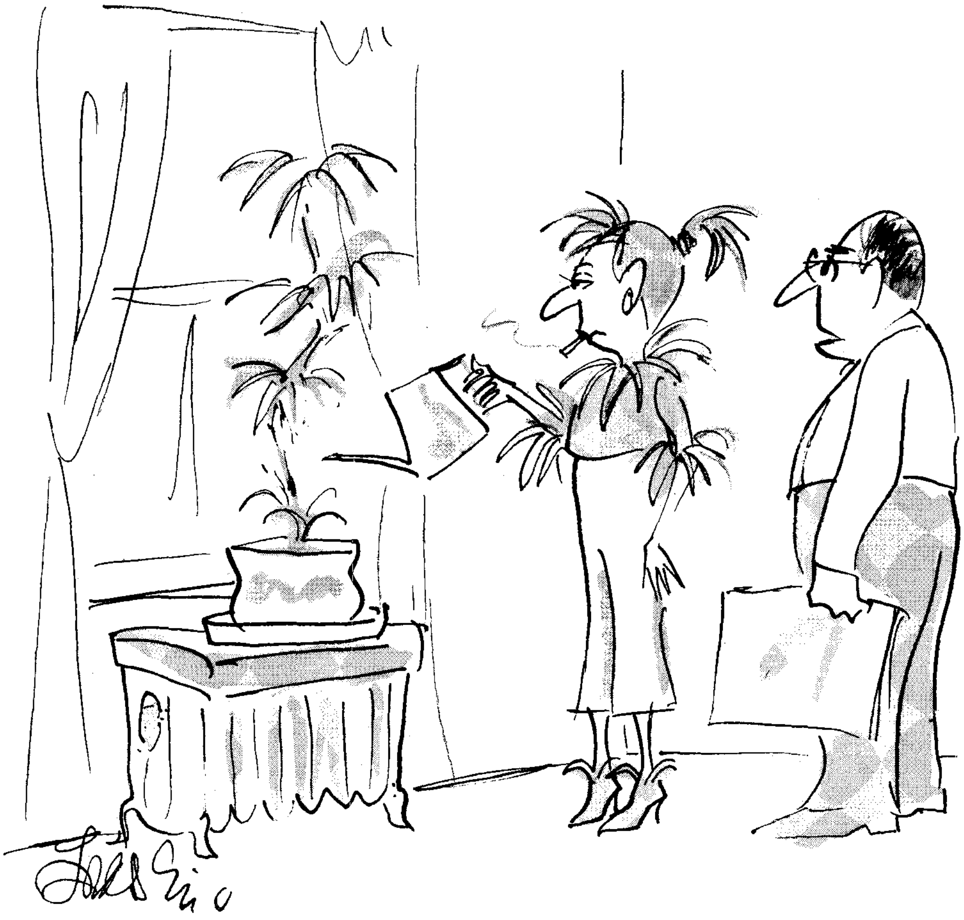
Suddenly he remembered. “The doll,” he said. “Where's the doll the man gave you?”

That was it. Her eyes were full of a kind of repressed delight. “I threw it in the cistern. I'm going to get a horse.”

“Well, good for you,” he said. “I thought the man presumptuous. Steer clear of that kind of fellow. He wants to play Lord Bountiful.”

What had she said? A horse? “And just where is this horse to come from?”

“He liked me,” she said, turning her face toward the fire. “And the have a lot. You said it was a hors farm.”



“You're beginning to look like that plant, or vice versa.”

Blood rushed to his head. Dream had forewarned of this. She was mysteriously flippant in his dreams, smu with hope. Now this ruse, throwin away a cheap doll for his approval an at the same time plotting to go bac to the doll's source for what she reall wanted.

The vegetable turned limp an unappetizing in its pan of water. H would not speak until he believed hi voice was sympathetic.

“Baby, look. You don't have to foo with strangers to get a horse. As soo as we have some money, I'll scour th state of Virginia until I find you gentle one.”

Her glance, direct and trustin again, was like a benediction, her nev tension relieved by the myth that h could get her what she wanted.

He found himself adrift, confused losing the thread of sequence. Here sh liked Haitians, she liked the Virginian she was willing to do business wit anyone. Witness the Popsicle and no the horse idea.

It was starting to sink in—th change in her. She liked the ver world she didn't know, poor thing and it liked her back. No matter th ulterior motives on either side. An where was he in all this? He with hi vast self-sacrifice and his respect fo her innocence? Where would he win up, having loved her, taught her, having just now finagled fate into keepin her little house for her?

It was too much for one day. Sh knew how to finish cooking supper. H balled the *Guardian* up and threw i into the fire. Then he lay down with mason jar of beer. “You don't mind, d you? Bring me some when it's tender.

She smiled and was completely herself again, patting his shoulder indulgently. “We are never going to mistreat it,” she said. “It can live here a long as it wants to, and I will brush i and ride it every single day.”

“Yes, yes,” he said. “As soon a I can.” He would open his eyes on more time, to eat the supper, and t check the blue light in the corner o the combine. —BERRY MORGA

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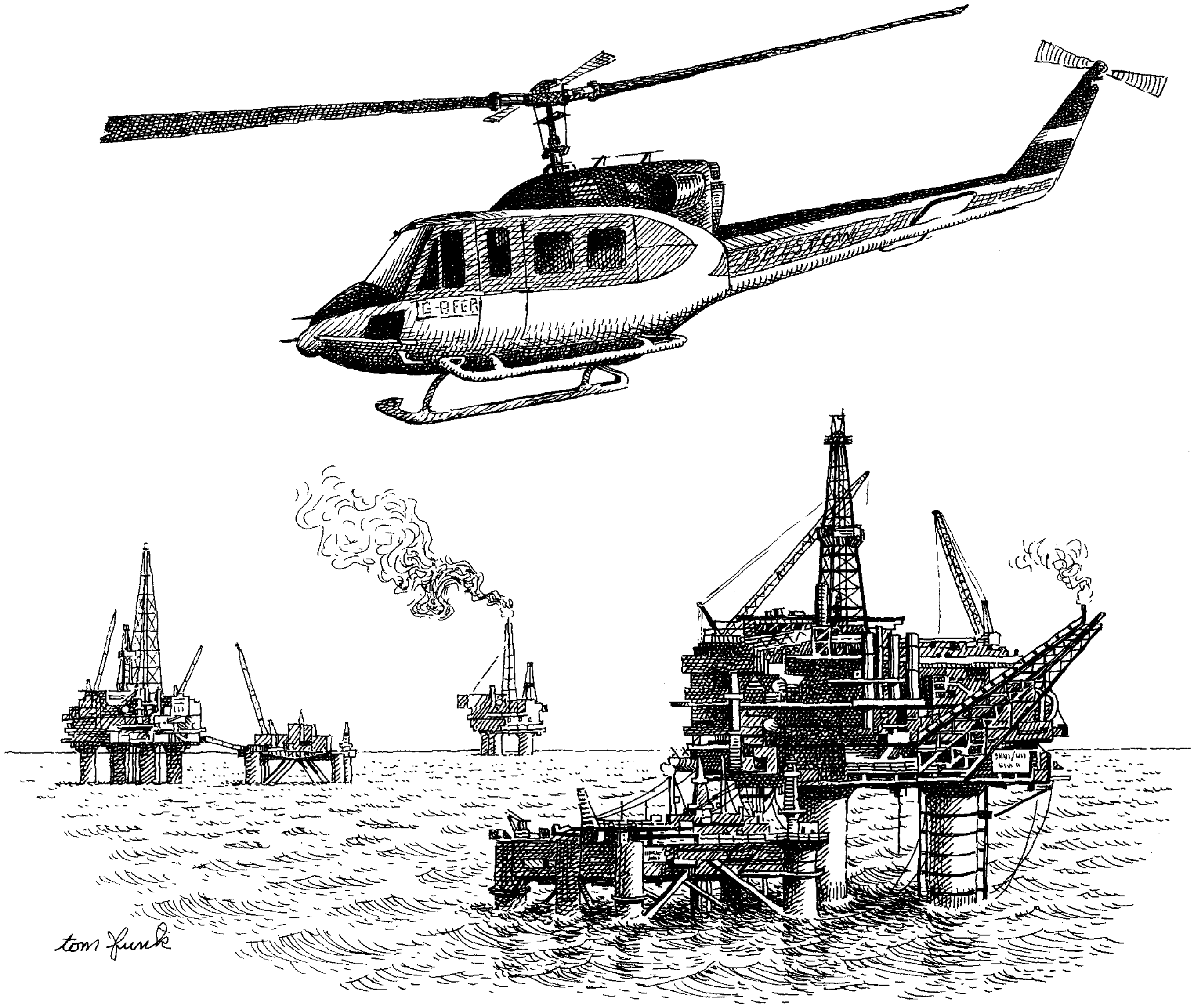
CONSTABULARY NOTES FROM ALL OVER

[*From the Police Log in the Winchester* (*Mass.*) *Star*]

A Cross St. resident mistakenly reporte her own car as a suspicious vehicle parke in the driveway.

A REPORTER AT LARGE

OFFSHORE—II



THERE is a colony of about six thousand Americans in Aberdeen—representatives of Texaco, Amoco, Phillips, Conoco, Occidental, and the numerous specialized companies that provide services, staff, and equipment to the forty or so oil companies operating in the North Sea. The Americans have their own school and their own clubs, and—by Scottish standards—they tend to overheat their houses, but mostly they have settled easily into the austere, wealthy Granite City. The young ones patronize plush bars and discos like Mr. G's and Champers; the more sedate join the Petroleum Club, which offers a swimming pool, squash courts, golf, and evenings of country-and-Western music; the most senior, depending on the season, fish for salmon or murder grouse with the local gentry. One or two have even bought and remodelled their own Highland castles.

Yet although they may temporarily give up bourbon and develop a taste for single-malt whiskey—the favorite is Glenmorangie—not all of them are totally integrated. Ted Brocklebank, one of Aberdeen's shrewdest journalists, told me of a hard-drinking evening he once spent with an American oilman: "Late on, I asked him how he was enjoying living here in Aberdeen. He was very drunk by that time, and he said, 'Hey, is that where we are?' It was just another oil town to him. He had his American company and his American store, his kids went to the American school, he talked on the phone to the guys back in Texas every day. He could have been anywhere."

John MacDonald, the meteorological officer, was the only American aboard Treasure Finder, the floating accommodation platform in Shell's Brent field, where I spent a week early one March. MacDonald was a big man with a big belly and a big King Edward cigar stuck permanently in the corner of his mouth. His office was next to the marine-control department, on the uppermost of the three main decks of this floating hotel—or "flotel," as it was called. He shared it with the radio operator, and it seemed excessively small and cramped for the important work they had to do. The two men huddled in their separate corners like squirrels in their nests, surrounded by gear and paperwork and postcards from far-off places. The air was thick with the smell of MacDonald's cigars; the atmosphere was casual and subdued. Voices squawked over the radio, the recording instruments hummed and clicked. There were large windows with a view of the four Brent platforms—Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, Delta—and the bleak sea.

Despite appearances, MacDonald is unlike most of the Americans in Aberdeen. He is not an oil gypsy, temporarily settled in Britain, ready to move on to wherever the action is next—Brunei or Alaska or the China seas. He is a man with a passion, and is there by choice. Or, rather, he is a man with two passions: for his tricky work, and for the British Isles. He was born in Boston, but his family scattered over the years, and in 1956 he joined the Air Force in lieu of a better home. The Air Force posted him to England that year, where he fell in love twice over: with an English nurse, whom he married, and with the place itself. In manner, he remains very American—relaxed, friendly, unbuttoned, a creature from a different world from that of most of his colleagues, whose style is generally a little formal, withheld, and Royal Navy, as though beneath the tatty work clothes and polo necks there were always a crisp shirt and a carefully knotted tie. MacDonald, too, is an ex-serviceman, and is reticent, sober (he is allergic to alcohol), and less keen to talk about himself than about the arcane science of weather forecasting. Yet when I asked him why he was working in this remote place his large face softened and he stared out through the window of his office over the unfriendly sea with the eye of love, like a man who has come home. He said that after three years in England he was posted back to the United States. That Christmas, at an airbase in Oklahoma, he watched a television spectacular about Christmas around the world. "Fifteen minutes of it was about England," he said. "And I sat there watching it with big tears rolling down my cheeks. In front of all my buddies. It was the only time I had ever felt homesick in my life, and it wasn't even for my own country." That memory stayed with him, and when he retired from the Air Force, in 1977, MacDonald returned to England, bought a house near Banbury, and began working offshore. He now commutes fortnightly between Oxfordshire and Treasure Finder. "So he found a job in the East Shetland Basin and lived happily ever after" is an unlikely ending for any story. In John MacDonald's case, it is true.

NOTHING BUT SNOW

How can I translate the pine
afloat, this evening, in its coat
of snow, or the black iron
of the graveyard gate,
a chorus of mournful twists,
its syllables elusive as a tongue?
How can I give the dead
some clarity? Already,
each grave wears the sag
and silence of snow.
This is an evening when nothing,
not a word, not a gift,
passes from one of us to the next,
a night we are so alone
we hardly notice it.
Our own breath announces us,
our own steps accompany us.
Tonight, I go into the graveyard,
where nothing is loose, not even God,
and under a few stars I shout out,
and wait, and shout again,
my joy insurmountable, as nothing,
nothing at all, returns.

—MARK WOLYNN

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ALTHOUGH on Treasure Finder, as on all the other offshore-oil installations, everybody works a twelve-hour shift seven days a week, Arthur Hewitt and Michael McCleave, the two men who run the flotel's administration office, put in longer hours than anyone else on board. "We're up at five, and sometimes we don't finish until midnight," Hewitt, a small man with an undernourished mustache and an incipient potbelly, told me. "We average around seventy hours overtime a trip. That's about two hundred and forty hours a fortnight. A seventeen-hour day." Hewitt likes to break situations down into figures, like a professional poker player reeling off the odds and the outs. It is a habit of mind that goes with the job. He showed me a telex sheet like one I had seen in the office of Ian McKnight, Treasure Finder's offshore-installation supervisor. It was about as long as a Rolls-Royce, and listed afresh each day the names of all those on board, categorizing them by company and department. Treasure Finder has a permanent crew of a hundred; the four hundred others who sleep and eat there have to be shuttled continually around the field by helicopter as they are required. Although routing them is work that demands great organizational skill, Hewitt takes it as a matter of course. "Up here, nearly everyone's ex-service," he said. "So we're used to moving people around in large numbers efficiently."

Hewitt's colleague, Mike McCleave, is tall, thin, and lipless, with straggly gray hair and a gaunt face. "There's nothing to it nowadays," he said. "It's just a matter of getting a routine and sticking to it. But back in '77 and '78, when the field was being built up, we had to cope with thirty flights a day from Sumburgh"—the Shetland staging post for crew-change flights from Aberdeen. "I didn't know what tired was until then. My home's south of London, and I used to sleep all the way back to town—still do, in fact. Once, I sleepwalked onto the wrong train and woke up in Brighton. The missus didn't take it too kindly."

Despite the killing hours that Hewitt and McCleave put in, their affability never falters. They have the specifically British talent for making the best of a bad job—the knowing, slightly downtrodden cheerfulness that got Londoners through the Blitz and used to be immortalized in Donald

"I'm a fancier of dogs and interesting men."

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IcGill postcards of gigantic matrons ith scrawny, lecherous husbands, and souvenirs from Blackpool inscribed ith poker-work aphorisms like 'Cheer up,' they said. 'Things could worse.' So I did and they were."

"Two trips offshore and you qualify a North Sea tiger," Hewitt said. "It esn't matter what job you do, a ti-er's a tiger back on the beach. Stew-ds, cooks, dogsbodies who don't even nell fresh air the whole time they're t here get back to Aberdeen, pull their cowboy boots, and swagger to the Yardarm, down by Victoria ock, saying they're toolpushers and ud engineers. Sometimes they'll even nd a bird who'll believe them. No onder people say North Sea mar-ages are doomed." While he talked, e scanned one of his lists, checking ff the names of the men waiting pa-ently, in their clumsy survival suits, r the next "bus"—the helicopter hat would take them to their place of ork in the field.

On the last day of my first trip ffshore, I flew by helicopter to Cor-orant A, the most westerly of Shell's orthern installations, to see Brent og (short for Logistics)—the flight-ontrol unit for the whole area. The revious day, Brent Log's home base ad been shut down while the drilling rew on Cormorant A fired an electrically controlled explosion into the oil-bearing strata far below. Since there was a remote chance that stray radio waves might set off the charge while it was at the surface, radio silence had to be maintained on the installation, and Brent Log had been moved temporarily to a makeshift office on Brent Charlie. Although it was a routine precaution, it was being taken particularly seriously at that time, because a gas explosion on Cormorant A two weeks earlier had killed three workmen. Pinned to the notice board on Treasure Finder was an appeal on behalf of the dead men's families.

It was a brisk, sparkling March day. The sun shone, the busy sea was an impenetrable blue flecked with white, the horizon seemed limitless. The platforms lay spread across the shining water, their plumes of flame and smoke streaming cheerfully into the clear sky. We flew over Amoco's North West Hutton, brand-new and painted bright orange. A diving rig named Uncle John was moored near it, low in the water and very small in comparison. To the north, on the edge of everything, British Petroleum's Magnus was a vague shape piercing the rim of the horizon. Its loneliness made the cluster of Brent installations seem downright comforting.

Cormorant A is a huge four-legged concrete gravity structure, held in place on the seafloor by its own weight. We circled it once in preparation for landing, then swung suddenly back out to sea. Over the intercom, the pilot announced, "We have a slight problem here. Cormorant Alpha is under red alert, so we can't land for the moment." His voice was without expression, although a red alert indicates a high level of potential danger.

Warning lights are placed throughout each installation—in the cabins, the corridors, the work areas, the recreation rooms, and the mess halls—and each new person arriving in the field is given a little card explaining their significance. A steady green light means that the platform is working normally. A flashing yellow light means "Stop all burning/welding and work requiring permits. Switch off all welding machines. Complete all crane lifts and set down loads. Evacuate columns. Await O.I.M.'s [offshore-installation manager's] instructions." When the red light begins to flash, the card instructs, "Stop all work. Shut down all operations. Isolate ignition sources. Go to assembly points or duty hazard points." The final stage is a flashing blue light accompanied by a howling siren, meaning "Remain at (or go to) assembly point. Await O.I.M.'s instructions." The O.I.M.'s

YE OLDE
JOHN SMYTHE
HOUSE
and
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JOHN SMYTHE
Stan Hunt

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instructions at this stage are usually to get into the lifeboats and prepare to abandon the platform.

A red alert, then, was the real thing. I tried to picture the hullabaloo: men running to assembly points, struggling into their life jackets; orders barked over the intercom. It would be like a Hollywood disaster movie: “North Sea Inferno.” An oilman in London had told me, “You’ve got to remember that if something goes wrong *in an oil refinery* you can run. But if something goes wrong on an offshore platform all you can do is jump over the side.”

In the helicopter, the man strapped in on one side of me said, in a bored voice, “Here we go again.” The man strapped in on my other side said, “Welcome to Cormorant Alpha.” Nobody else took any notice.

The helicopter slid sidewise until we were a mile or so from the platform, and then began to circle patiently. The sun shone, the gas flare—which burns off the excess gas that is extracted with the oil—blazed peacefully into the mild sky. W were too far off to see an signs of activity on boar After five minutes, th pilot said, in the same fl voice, “We are back t green.” Two minute later, we had landed. Everyone on the installatio was moving quietly abo his work. There was n sign of an emergency, an no mention of it later. Th situation, in fact, was s blandly normal that, onc on board, I forgot to as why there had been a re alert. And even if I ha remembered, the questio in that unruffled cal would not have been appropriate.

Because Brent Log wa at one point, the second busiest air-traffic-contr unit in Europe (surpasse only by Heathrow), I ha expected something larg and shiny and comple What I found was a cluttered room not much bigger than a student’s bed sitter, and not all of i devoted to air-traffic control. To the right of th door was a bathroom-size cubicle, partitioned of from the rest of the roo housing Shell Marin Control, which coördinate the movements of all th shipping in the area—supply boats, support ship tankers.

Brent Log itself was battery of tired-lookin radio equipment lining workbench that ran th width of the room. At th right-hand end of th bench sat two air-logistic coördinators. One coördinates the crew-change helicopters t and from the beach, or mainland—Chinooks from Aberdeen, Sikorsk S-61s from Sumburgh—organizin the passengers, calculating baggag weights, passing on arrival times, s that the helidecks are manned an ready. The other man does the sam for the in-field flights of the Bell 212s he regulates the moving of freigh from platform to platform and positions people to fill vacant seats.

At the center of the bench was small Apple computer, its displa

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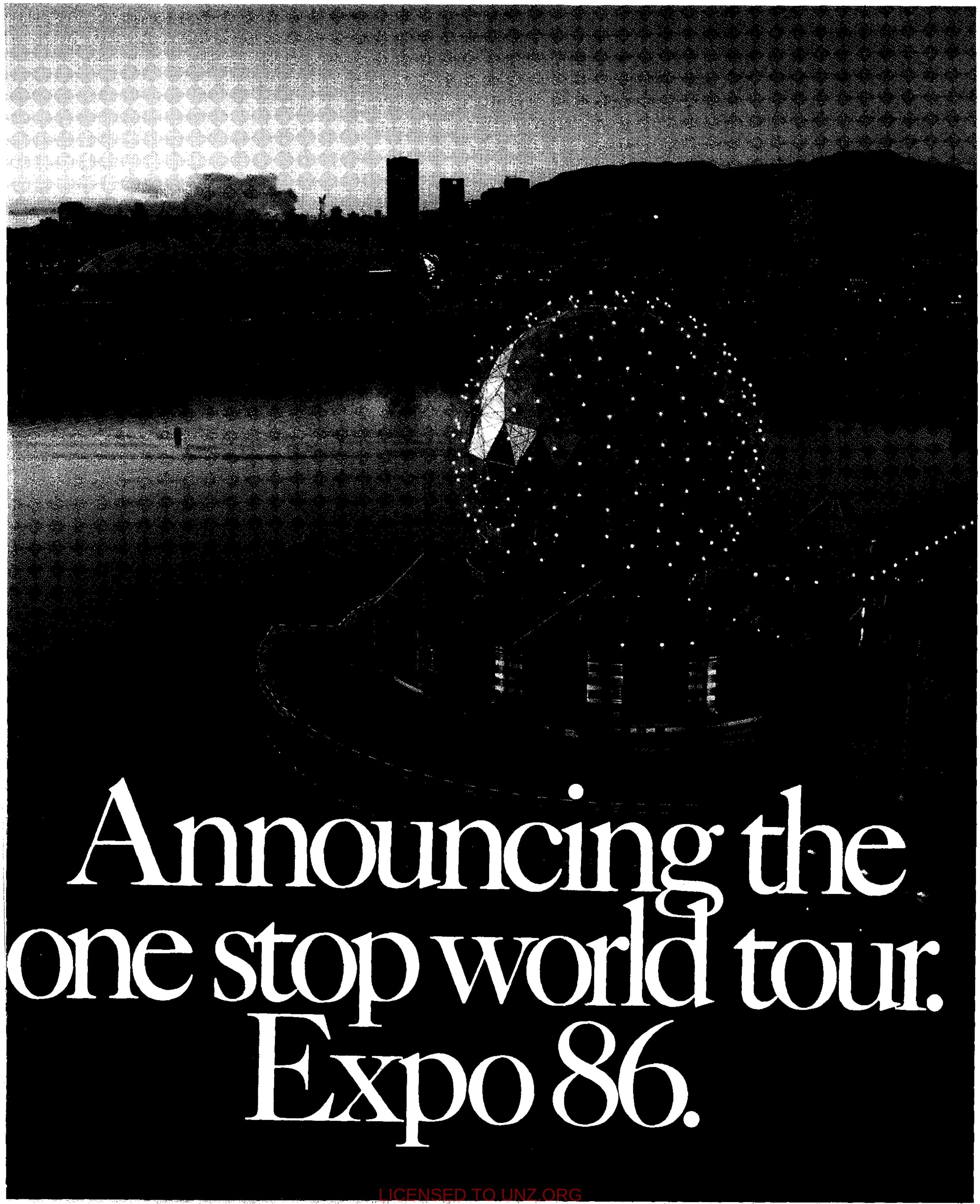
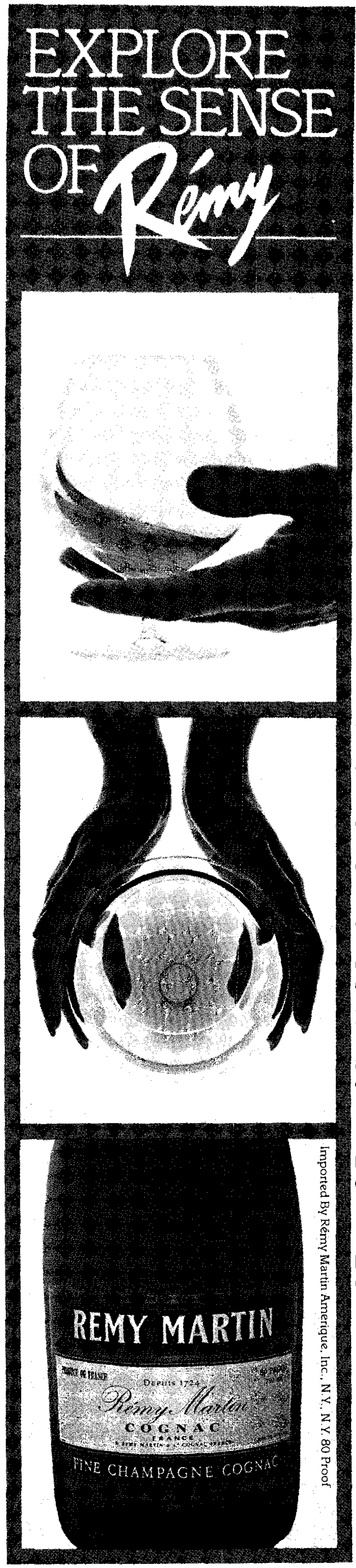




screen gray and empty. When the appropriate data are fed into it, it will give the precise hourly position of any object in the sea—an oil slick, a buoy, a lifeboat, a man overboard. It is a piece of equipment that everyone in Brent Log hopes to use as little as possible.

At the left-hand end of the bench sat two men who control all the air traffic in the East Shetland Basin. Both were middle-aged, relaxed, and confident; both had learned their skills in the Royal Air Force and now worked for a company called International Aeradio, Ltd., or I.A.L., which contracts them to Shell. Well, yes, they said, it's still pretty busy up here—anything between three hundred and five hundred movements a day. But some of those flights are very short—sometimes as little as a couple of minutes—and nearly all of them need nothing more than radio calls, not the elaborate talking-down process that a jumbo jet requires when it lands. No problem, they said. Not the way it used to be. They seemed almost nostalgic for the frantic years of 1977-78, when the Brent field was being brought into operation and their ramshackle little office was the second-busiest air-traffic-control unit in Europe, handling about seven hundred movements a day. They told me that the Chinooks, flying direct from Aberdeen with their big payloads, had made their lives much easier, because they meant fewer flights. Yet, despite the Chinooks and the levelling off of the size of the work force now that the whole field was operational, they had still logged a total of eight hundred and forty-nine thousand five hundred and twenty-six air movements between their start, in the spring of 1977, and the end of the previous month, February of 1983. They expected to clock up their millionth movement before the end of the year. "It's the sort of thing we ought to celebrate," one of them said. "But how do you celebrate on a dry platform?" "And who's got the time?" the other said.

The atmosphere in Brent Log was remarkably good-tempered, despite the ceaseless radio chatter. Each exchange between pilot and air control required that the helicopter's position be fixed on a chart and then checked off against a board on which were listed the flight number, the names of the passengers, the nature of the freight, and the stopping places around the field. As each flight was completed, it was crossed off the board. The traffic controllers consulted their board, scribbled notes, and coped politely with my questions, constantly breaking off in midsentence to answer a squawking voice from one or the other of the loudspeakers on the bench in front of them. At their backs, a shoulder-high, glass-fronted tape recorder switched itself on and off automatically, activated by the distorted voices from the loudspeakers.

Behind the tape recorder was a row of steel filing cabinets that formed a half wall around the desk and chair that Thomas Ogston, the supervisor of Brent Log, calls his office. Ogston's official title is offshore flying coördinator of Brent Logistics—or flyco, Brent Log—and he belongs properly to neither end of the office's workbench, being by trade neither an air-logistics coördinator nor an air-traffic controller. His particular qualification is a lifetime's experience with aircraft, both fixed-wing and helicopters. "I know what I can ask my contractors to do and not to do," he said. "At the same time, I can make sure that Shell is getting good value out of the aircraft in the field—the optimum use without overstretching them. And then, with my air-logistics team, I can oversee just what the requirements are on every job. Let's say a toolpusher"—the man in charge of oil drilling—"wants to move a drilling bit from the North Cormorant field to Dunlin. I know what it weighs, and I also know that the floor loading of the 212 is about one hundred pounds per square foot; therefore, we need to put in spreader boards and use a special technique of loading and unloading. I'm using all this knowledge of mine on behalf of the company, and there's a lot of enjoyment in that, just by itself. Then, there's the added pleasure of working with a good bunch of boys."

Ogston's boys looked to be in their forties, and he was fifty-seven—the oldest man I met offshore—although he had thick fair hair untouched by gray and had the energy of a man half his age. Energy is an essential qualification for the job, since his day starts at 5 A.M. and does not end until the last flights have landed and the next day's flying program has been worked out in every detail and telexed back to the operators in Aberdeen and

Sumburgh and on Treasure Finder. Even when all that is done, Ogston and his team may still be called out during the night if a man is injured and has to be flown to a hospital.

Though Ogston learned his flying during the Second World War, he was not in the R.A.F. but in Britain's Army Air Corps, which used gliders, in the days before the techniques of the airdrop were fully developed, to fly men and matériel behind the enemy lines. After the Glider Pilot Regiment was disbanded, in 1948, he spent eleven years flying little Auster spotter planes. In 1959, he transferred to helicopters, which he flew for sixteen years, the last twelve as a training captain, travelling around the world initiating R.A.F. student pilots into the mysteries of the machines. "A lot of the pilots out here—now working for British Airways, Bristow, North Scottish—were my students," he said. "They all greet me warmly, which is nice. If I run into them back on the beach, they always buy me a beer. So I can't have been too bad."

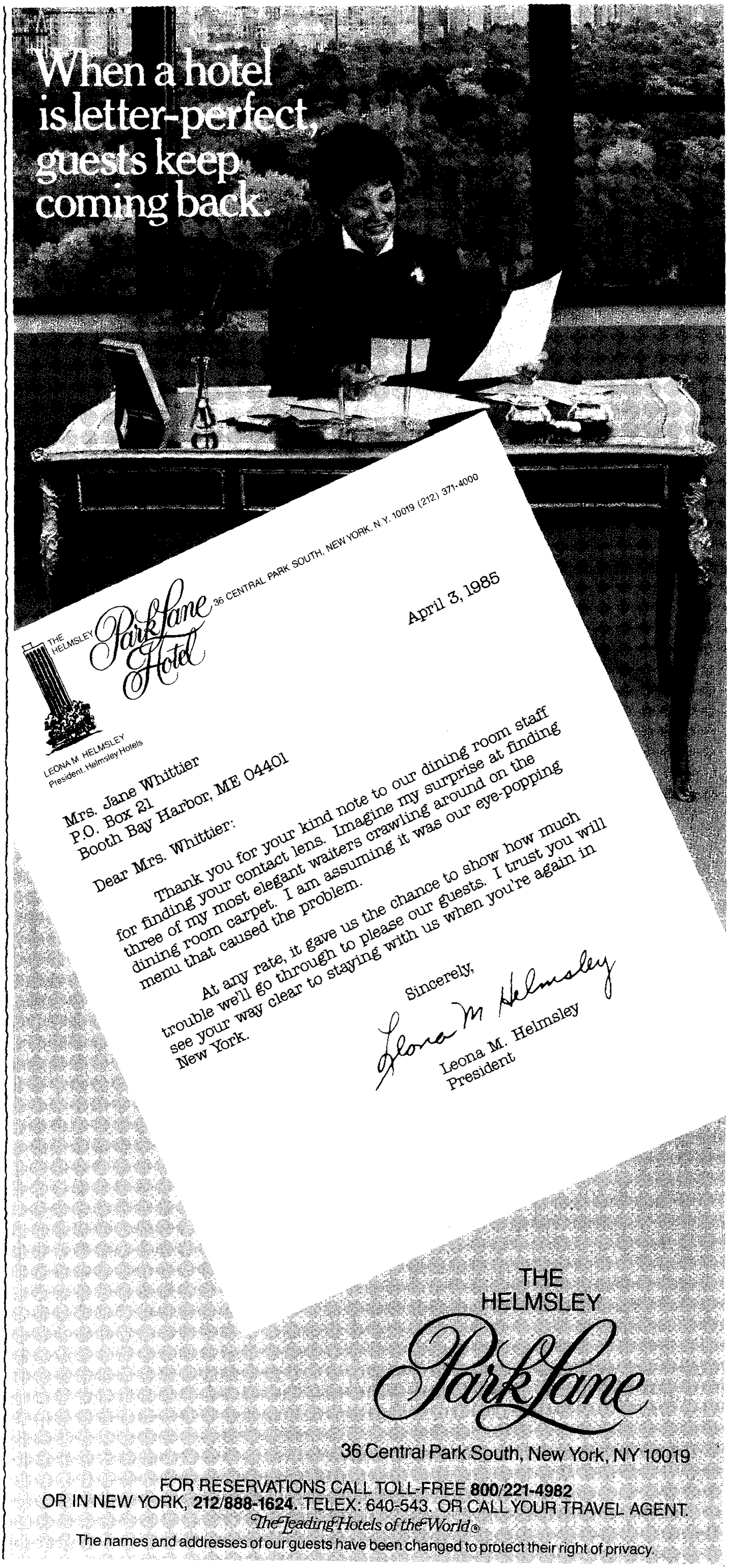
For twenty years, flying was Ogston's whole life. "I was married to a career," he said. "Weekends, I'd sit around the base and do air tests while the other chaps went home to their wives. I was totally happy: I loved planes, I loved flying, there was nothing else I wanted. But you change, you know, without realizing it. When I got to be about forty, I began to think there might be something in this marriage lark. I also thought, I'm getting on—soon it'll be too late to start a family. It just so happened that that was when I met my wife."

I said it must be difficult to be married to a man who not only flies unstable contraptions like helicopters but is also away much of the time.

Ogston was unmoved. "She's a service wife," he said. "She was a nurse in Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps, so she and I have the same outlook. When I pack my bags and tip my hat and say, 'I'm off to Malaya, love,' she just gives me a kiss and waves goodbye. She knows what the job's about. Nowadays, of course, I spend two weeks out of every four at home, so we see more of each other than we ever did before." He paused, then added thoughtfully, "Marrying added another dimension to my life; it didn't alter my love for the service."

I asked how they had met.

"It was a Good Friday, and nearly everyone had knocked off for the Easter holidays," Ogston said. "I was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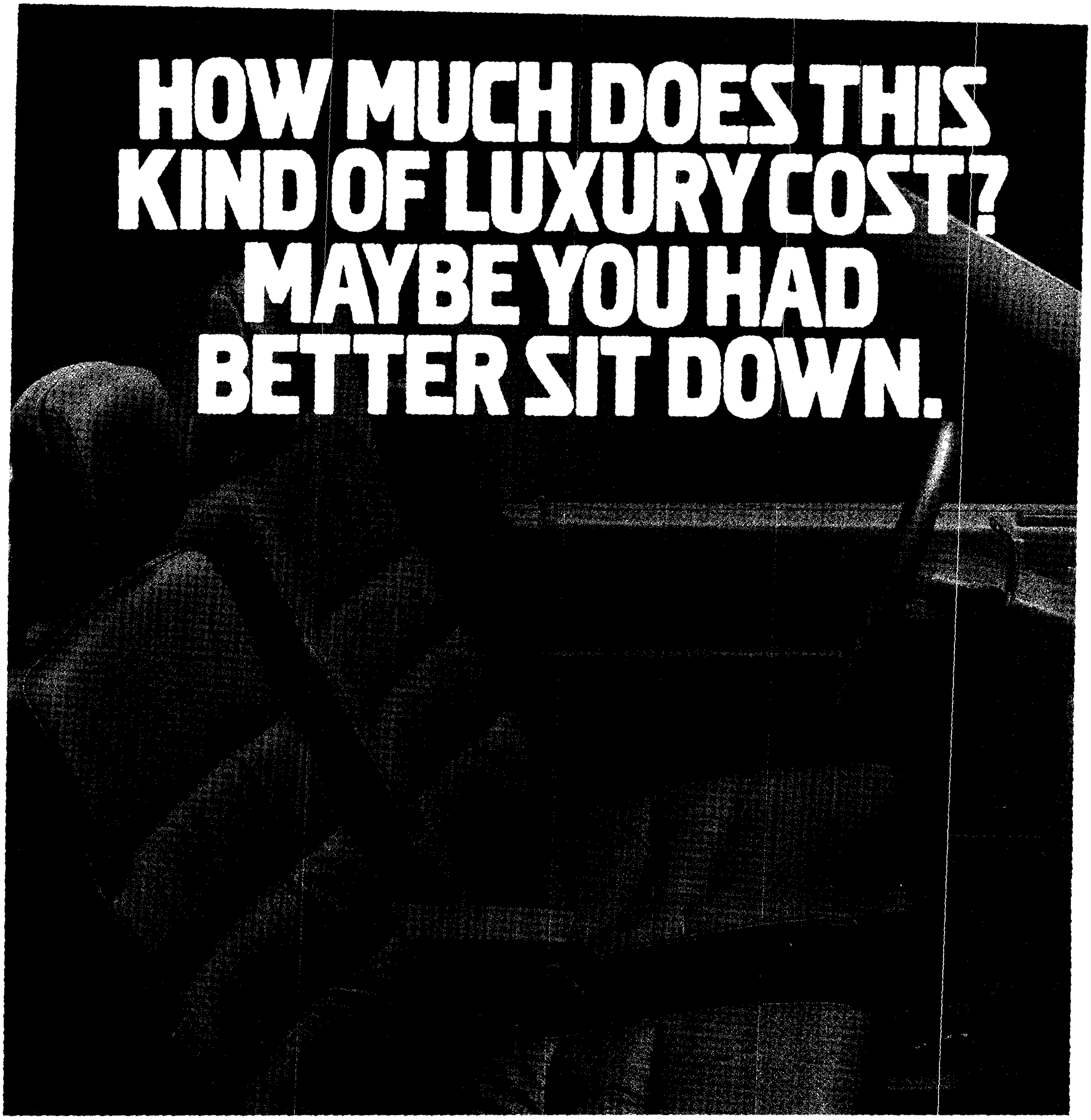

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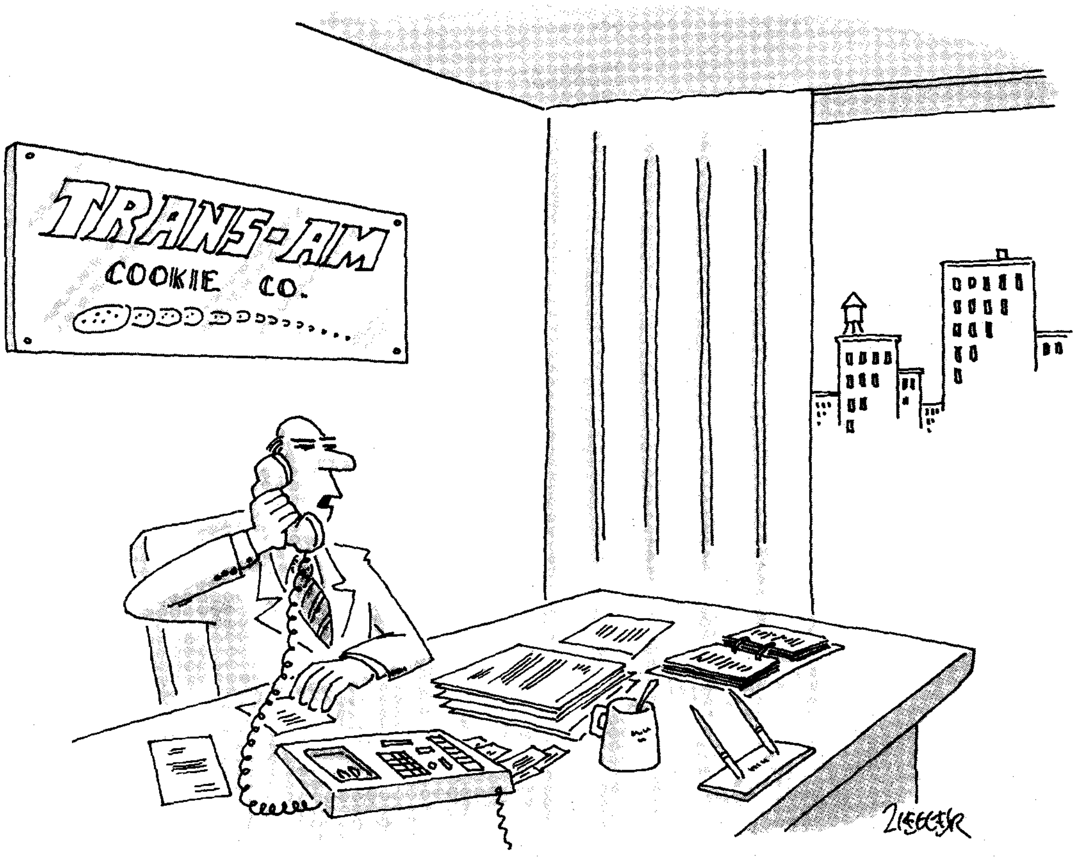


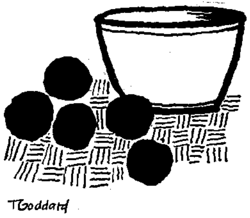
"Sorry, Bob, but we'll have to cancel tomorrow's lunch. I'm summiting all week with the boys from Amalgamated Chocolate Chip."

living in the mess, and because my parents were dead and I was an only child I had no relations to go to. So I thought I might as well do some air tests. That involves two stages: first the airframe and its ancillaries, then the engine. For both of them, the aircraft has to be at maximum takeoff weight if the figures are to make any sense. When we loaded her up with fuel and crew, we found we were about two hundred pounds short. So I said, 'Ring up the hospital and ask one of the nurses to come.' And this little girl arrived—twenty-one years old, four foot eleven, and slim as a whisker. The first thing I said to her was 'How much do you weigh, love?' 'Ninety-six pounds,' she answered. So I said to my chief mechanic, 'Three more toolboxes, Fred,' and off we went. It was a nice day, one of those soft spring days you get in the south of England, and she'd never been up in any kind of aircraft before. In an air test, you have to fly very accurately and steadily, so I told her not to worry, I wasn't going to do anything desperate. And she loved it. When we got back down, I asked her to come the next day while I did the high-altitude test. That entails a rapid climb, shouting out what the figures read at each thousand-foot mark. Well, Easter Saturday was another lovely, sunny day, and off we roared to ten thousand feet. At that point in the test, you have time to chat, so I pointed out the landmarks to her: there's Oxford, that's the edge of London, and down to the south you can see the whole of the Isle of Wight. I could see she was enjoying herself, so I asked her out to dinner that evening. We went to a nice little place between Amesbury and Salisbury. Candlelight and soft music. And that was it. Bang! Now here I am at fifty-seven with children of fourteen and eleven, while all my contemporaries' kids have left home and are earning money to keep Mum and Dad."

Ogston made it sound very simple. Like John MacDonald, he seemed to e without malice, at peace with himself, absorbed in his work, and curiously lacking in that skin of indifference which most of us acquire as we grow older, as though he were moving to a less broken and devious rhythm than the one that impels people back on the beach. Listening to his youthful, enthusiastic voice, I thought that what had brought me out to the North Sea was not just curiosity about the technological miracle in an impossible environment which had saved Britain from slipping to the bottom of the European economic ladder, somewhere below Spain, that other decayed imperial power. I had also made the trip because I am a man with a sedentary, middle-class occupation who wanted, just once, to be in a place where people deal with things other than pieces of paper and can see and quantify the results of their work.

With someone like Ogston, the rewards were obvious: he seemed happy. But the other side of the coin was equally plain: the claustrophobia, strain, loneliness, exhaustion, boredom in the field; the drinking and broken marriages back on the beach. "When you first come out, it's a novelty," said a technician who had worked offshore for five years. "You fly on helicopters, you see things you've never seen before. But once you've been out here awhile it's like being in prison. You're cut off from all the normal things—trees, grass, people you don't know. You never get a news program or an up-to-date paper. You see the same faces, day in, day out, for two weeks on end, and you get fed up with them, however decent they are. That can cause psychological problems. People get short-tempered for no apparent reason. You have to tread carefully; you can never really relax. It takes a special temperament to last out here, and if you haven't got it you couldn't stick offshore life no matter how much money you earned. I don't think anyone really enjoys coming out here to work. Nobody would do it as a career, or admit to himself he's going to be working in the North Sea for twenty years. The majority of the Shell guys are looking for promotion to an office job in Aberdeen. As for the rest of us, the idea is to acquire a bit of money—as far as the tax system allows—and start up businesses of our own."

The man who said this was disgruntled but was by no means alone in his way of thinking. He had been sit-



ting with three friends in the Brent Alpha mess when I spoke to him, and whenever he hesitated the others urged him on. The four had one characteristic in common: they were not professional oilmen, nor had they been in the services; rather, all were civilians with specialized skills that were needed offshore. Later, on the same installation, I talked to a burly, bearded man called Nick Smyth, who told me at length what, for him, was wrong with life in the North Sea. Smyth had come offshore because he and his wife needed money for their farm in Wales, where they raised sheep, ran a market garden, sold dog food, and rented out holiday accommodations. "We had a very specific family plan," he said. "To carry it out, we could either win the football pools or rob a bank or find some other way of acquiring a certain amount of capital. We still haven't found a suitable bank, so here I am." He had previously worked as a group-electrical-development engineer for the British Steel Corporation; the job offshore, as a contract electrical engineer, offered him three times the salary for a fraction of the responsibility. Like Ogston, Smyth was an enthusiast, bursting with energy, yet however much he busied himself in his spare time—he was teaching himself to touch-type, was writing about his experiences in the North Sea, and took photographs that appeared in magazines—he still felt constricted and frustrated. "I find it very dilapidating, both mentally and physically," he said. "Mentally, because I'm used to having an interesting job, and now I haven't got one; physically, because it's impossible to get enough exercise. I walk around the platform two or three times a day. Big deal. I'd rather be a scaffolder, out in the elements. As it is, I feel I'm going to the dogs in every way. At home, if I want to be warm I've got to get into the Land-Rover, go up the mountain, find some wood, chop it into eight-foot lengths, load up a ton, bring it down, saw it up, and stack it in the woodshed three months before it's needed. Here not only are you heated—you're too hot. On the farm, if I want an egg I have to go and shift one of the ducks, or drive up to the village if the ducks aren't laying. Here you just reach out and it's there. You get terribly lazy, and that's just one part of the mental degradation. Your brain goes to sleep. I think I have an A.P.U.—an auxiliary power unit—at the back of my head which does me offshore. But when I get back into the real world I have to start thinking again. My problem is that out here I just do not have *any* job satisfaction. When I was working for British Steel, I could look at a steel mill and say, 'I designed and commissioned all the electrics for that forty-million-pound contract, and it works.' When I came offshore, I applied for a post as a senior authorized person—the fellow who issues permits to people telling them exactly what they can and can't do with high-voltage switch gear. It was a job I'd done many times, and I thought, Great, I'm going to do some commissioning, I'm actually going to make things work. But the week I got out to the platform the organization changed. Now all I do is run bloody cables about the installation, and I'm afraid I just can't get orgiastic about running cables."

Back on the beach, Shell has a bureaucracy as large and intricate as the civil service of a medium-sized nation, and with all the usual civil-service weaknesses: interdepartmental bickering, power plays, red tape, committee men cutting one another's throats. But out in the North Sea, where the action is, the bureaucratic jostling is kept in check by the need to get results. Smyth, however, had been caught in some kind of organizational finessing, and had ended up with a job for which he was grossly overqualified. Hence his impatience, his frustration. He moved his hands as he talked, stretched his legs, leaned forward and suddenly back; his voice was puzzled and indignant. It was like hearing a car with a faulty clutch—the engine revving frantically and nothing happening.

To add to his dissatisfaction, Smyth missed his family. Ogston was grateful to his job because it allowed him more time with his wife and children than he had ever enjoyed in the services. For civilians like Smyth, the unalterable onshore-offshore routine was yet another deprivation. "My kids are growing up, and they're only kids once," he said. "I always seem to be away for the important occasions. Either you miss the run-up to Christmas or you miss Christmas or you miss the New Year. And, whichever it is, knowing it's going to happen casts a blight on the festivities. I'm just not prepared to put up with it anymore—all the negotiation and sidestepping and body-swerving just to get around the Christmas–New Year epic. It's not worth it. So at the end of the year I'm going home. I'll get some sort of menial job—sweeping the roads, anything that will bring in a regular income—and try to earn the rest from selling photographs and articles, from the holiday accommodation and the sheep. We'll have to economize, but it will be worth it."

"Then what?" I asked.

And, briefly, the whirring engine faltered, Smyth's face clouded, his eyes became vague. "Then we start something," he said. "The thing being unspecified at this moment. Whatever offers itself. But something we can run entirely from home—living at home, working at home. God knows how we'll manage. My wife does all the finances. In fact, there isn't very much she doesn't do, while I sit out here feeling useless. But until I say, 'I've had enough, lass, I'm coming home, and somehow or other we're going to find enough money to carry on,' I don't think we shall ever succeed in anything. You can plan up to a certain point, but if you've got only twelve days out of twenty-eight to catch up nothing is going to work." Although his confidence seemed to return as he talked, his expression was hurt, as though "Then what?" were not a fair question to ask an unhappy man. Offshore was the lion in his path and home the place where all problems would be magically solved. What would happen after he disposed of the lion was not a question he could even begin to consider.

Smyth opened a folder and brought out a set of photographs he had taken during one of the terrible storms that blow up regularly in the North Sea: waves thundering around the legs of a platform so high up they seem about to rip away the girders below the bottom deck, the whole ocean in uproar, the lights steady on the superstructure. The camera he had used was cheap and elderly, but the results were brilliant. I had seen a blown-up poster of one of them in Shell-Mex House in London, and another version in a glossy Esso publication called "The North Sea Success Story." It seemed strange that Shell should be able to use to the full the expertise and experience of a man like Tom Ogston while all Smyth's talent and energy were allowed to whir away to no good purpose. Perhaps the reason is that the exorbitant expense of the North Sea installations is justified solely by the amount of oil they produce. They are a simplified world, where nothing applies except work. Those who come out there are required to leave behind not only their families but also whichever areas of their personalities will interfere with the smooth functioning of this dedicated oil-producing machine.

WHEN I questioned Captain John Hopson, Shell's head of aircraft services at Aberdeen, about helicopters, he spoke willingly about the fascination of flying but could not remember that helicopters had ever given him any special problems. Tom Ogston, however, talked about flying helicopters, as he talked about everything else, passionately and enthusiastically, as though he had kept a hot line open to his youth. "It's an entirely different technique," he said. "In a fixed-wing aircraft, you're worried about stalling speed, whereas in a helicopter you're flying at no airspeed or flying backward or sidewise. The coördination is different, too. A helicopter has extra controls. If you move one, you must move all the others—each control has an effect that has to be countered by corrections on the other controls. Because a chopper is inherently unstable, you have to fly it with pinpoint accuracy and feel. In the first ten hours of training, your morale goes right down. You need a football pitch to hover the blooming thing. It feels sort of delicate, and it takes time to get used to the lag, to develop a sixth sense of when to put in a correcting movement and when to take it out again. It's mind-tying, like hopping up and down on one leg and trying to pat your head and rub your tummy at the same time. But after about ten hours the penny drops. One morning, you get into the chopper with your instructor and suddenly you've got it all at your fingertips. Then your morale soars. You can do things with a helicopter—put it in small spaces and work close to the ground—that make it far more enjoyable than a fixed-wing aircraft. In time, it becomes part of you: you wear it like a pair of trousers and can put it anywhere you like—literally within inches when you're working with a winchman in an air-sea rescue operation. Of course, there are more principles of flight to learn, so in the classroom it seems more complicated than a fixed-wing aircraft. But that, too, adds to the pleasure, because it's more of a challenge. So once you've warmed to flying a helicopter it stays enjoyable. All the time you're sitting in the cockpit—especially when you're hovering, or doing delicate work with an underslung load—all those little red arrows that you've seen on the blackboard are working away in your brain. Anyone who saw you would say, 'He's just sitting there doing nothing.' But in fact you're thinking about those little thrust arrows and making tiny adjustments and balancing the machine like a juggler with a plate on a stick. It's the concentration that makes it interesting, and that's the secret of good flying."

I had asked Ogston about flying because I was returning to Aberdeen on a Chinook and, courtesy of Captain Hopson, would once again sit in the jump seat between the two pilots, as I had done on a Sikorsky S-61 on the way out. Before the aircraft arrived, I put my feet up for an hour in the cabin of one of the senior officers of Cormorant A, whose bedside reading seemed to encapsulate the preoccupations of life offshore: the previous week's editions of *The Economist* and *New Scientist*, six pinup magazines, and, as a gesture to the lavish cooking, a much-thumbed copy of a book called "The Carbohydrate Counter." I knew I had been away from home too long, because the pinups looked good.

When I went up to the helideck, the wind had dropped. The afternoon sun rode clear in a pale-blue sky that merged imperceptibly into the ultramarine of the sea. In the distance, the Chinook, as it approached head-on, was squat and bulbous, like a muscular, belligerent insect. "Watch for the downdraft," the helideck officer said sternly. "It'll tear things right out of your pockets."

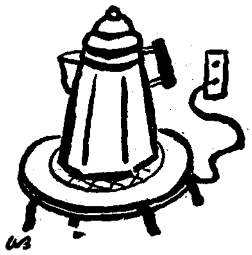
Compared with the little Bells, or even with the Sikorskys, the Chinook was a huge machine. Its giant rotors fore and aft and two screaming jet engines in the tail created its own storm wind. Its great flat belly blotted out the sky. It seemed disproportionate to the helideck, to the installation itself, like a jumbo jet in a city square, although it touched down as gently as a leaf. A line of windows—the same as those of a Boeing 727—ran the length of its fuselage. Below them were the vast twin fuel pods that make the thing look so bulbous and also enable it to ride thirty-foot seas without capsizing. Inside, it was like a modern airliner: comfortable seats upholstered in orange, luggage bins, a steward to welcome you aboard, and, when the doors were closed on the din outside, the faint sound of piped music. It seemed an unlikely machine to wear like a pair of trousers.

It was now past 3 P.M., and neither of the pilots had eaten since breakfast, so someone was sent down to the platform's galley for food. While I waited with them in the cockpit, the chief pilot told me, with considerable satisfaction, that they had just flown the three hundred miles from Aberdeen and held for seven minutes while in-field choppers were taking off; now they would return to Aberdeen without refuelling, and still arrive with enough fuel to hold, if necessary, for twenty minutes. "Happiness is a full fuel tank," he said.

The steward opened the door behind me and passed in a plastic tray covered with aluminum foil. "At this moment," the second pilot said, "happiness is a full belly."

The chief pilot muttered something incomprehensible into his face microphone and listened intently to the reply. The men on the helideck ran for cover, the scream of the jet engines increased, the clatter of the rotors changed in intensity, and we rose effortlessly, very fast and very high. A great scroll of smoke rolled from the gas flare of a nearby installation. When we passed through it, at three thousand feet, it seemed like cloud. I listened to the radio chatter between Brent Log and the pilots with the volume control of my headphones turned down, while the sun blasted off the placid water far below. When we reached our cruising altitude of four thousand feet, the chief pilot double-checked our compass heading, locked the controls onto automatic, and said, "Lunchtime." The second pilot peeled back the foil from the plastic tray. On it were six weary little rolls with a single slice of processed cheese hanging limply out of each. The pilots eyed them with distaste. Finally, reluctantly, the chief pilot picked one up and bit into it. "Yesterday's bread," he announced. The second pilot said, "Son of a bitch." Even so, they patiently chewed their way through two rolls each, leaving the two others on the console between them.

Unlike smaller helicopters, the Chinook has a great deal of equipment to make the pilots' lives easier: there is an on-board computer—called the flight-director system—that does most of the calculations that are normally done by the pilot and displays the results in a series of command bars, which the pilot then acts on; it also has an autopilot, like those used in commercial jets, and a new Primus weather radar. With this combination, a Chinook can follow a radio beacon and glide down a flight path to an airport automatically. When the first Chinook was delivered to British Airways Helicopters, in July of 1981, the director of flight operations, Captain Michael Evans, commented delightedly, "The difference between the Boeing Vertol [the Chinook] and the Sikorsky we've been using can be explained like this: it's like going from a Rover 3500 to a Rolls-Royce."



Yet on the flight back to Aberdeen both the pilots looked tired, despite the labor-saving devices that enabled them to munch away on their dry cheese rolls with their hands off the controls. "On a day like this, it's child's play," the chief pilot said. "But we've had a rough spell. Each of these jets develops forty-five hundred shaft horsepower, while a small chopper makes do with seven hundred. So fly one of these babies in bad weather for two or three days and you really feel you've been doing something."

The radar screen at the center of the control panel was large and bright-colored. Curved blue lines divided it horizontally into equal segments. When we took off, these indicated five, ten, and twenty-five miles, but the range was adjustable from two hundred miles down to two. "On two, we can pick out an oil barrel in the water," the chief pilot said, and he juggled with it for my benefit. The green sweep moved backward and forward across the screen, backward and forward like a metronome, leaving a trail of glowing green dust, which was the sea. Small objects came up in yellow; large objects were yellow with red centers, like ripe peaches. With the scale set on ten miles, a yellow dot appeared at the top of the screen and moved slowly down it, growing in size. When the pilot switched to the two-mile scale, the yellow dot became a large blob with a red core. Moments later, a supply boat appeared in the windows in front of our feet. "Hey, presto!" said the chief pilot. Then he switched back to the ten-mile scale, like a conjurer repeating a successful trick, while the sun blazed in through the right-hand window, baking us in our bulky survival suits. A northbound Chinook passed us five miles to the west, a fly crawling beneath a tail of cloud.

Just after five o'clock, two hours after takeoff, a big, ragged mouth, flashing yellow and red, appeared on the fifty-mile band at the top of the radar screen. "Land!" said the chief pilot. Despite the perfect conditions, he sounded relieved. The mouth grew rapidly as it crawled down the screen. The second pilot picked up one of the cheese rolls, peered at it critically, put it down again, and began to twiddle the controls on the radio. The steward appeared at the door behind us. He said that some of the passengers were booked on the last flight from Aberdeen to Glasgow, at six-thirty, and others had trains to catch; all of them were beginning to fret. The chief pilot checked the dials and the radar, and sent back a reassuring message about our expected time of arrival. The steward was soon back for more reassurance. The closer the aircraft got to land, the edgier the passengers were becoming; after two weeks offshore, the idea of wasting a night in a hotel in Aberdeen was clearly not to be borne. The yellow-and-red stain crept slowly down the screen.

The chief pilot radioed ground control in Aberdeen about seats available on the Glasgow flight, then switched the radar to the twenty-five-mile scale. By five-twenty, the yellow mouth was nibbling the ten-mile band. Immediately, the pilot switched to the ten-mile scale, moving the yellow back to the top of the screen. It seemed to move now with a terrible slowness, although our airspeed had not altered. Like the other passengers, I was impatient to be back. When the yellow stain crept below the five-mile line, I craned forward for a glimpse of the coast, but all I could see was a thick wall of cloud. The day darkened, the cabin became cooler as we flew into the murk.

The steward was back again, looking more harassed than ever. One of the passengers with a ticket for Glasgow did not yet have a confirmed seat. There was another flurried exchange of messages with the Aberdeen airport. They were sorry, but the flight was fully booked. This was urgent, repeat urgent. They would see what they could do. Repeat urgent. They heard us and were trying. Silence. Seat confirmed. Thank you, repeat thank you. Roger and out. The chief pilot buzzed the steward with the good news and settled back in his seat. "That's my bit done for Queen and country," he said.

Ten minutes later, the cloud broke, and there below us was the coastline: a long beach, with its ribbon of breakers; dull fields beyond. All that green seemed strange after days of nothing but steel and water. The chief pilot switched the radar to the five-mile scale, buckled his safety belt, slid his seat forward, and leaned toward the dials of the control panel, peering at them intently, as though seeing them for the first time. The second pilot pressed the switches to illuminate the "NO SMOKING" and "FASTEN SEAT BELT" signs in the cabin. Both the pilots seemed suddenly tense and watchful, their gaze shifting continually from the dials to the landscape outside. Their concentration was like a physical presence in the cabin, almost palpable, although the aircraft was still flying on automatic. "I'll bring her in on the radio beam, so you can see the wonders of modern science," the chief pilot said. We flew back into heavy cloud and stayed in it, although the altimeter read only twenty-seven hundred feet and we were dropping steadily at our hundred-and-twenty-knot cruising speed. We flew inland, then swung south.

Just below a thousand feet, the cloud cleared at last. We were approaching Aberdeen airport from the west, facing out to sea. The flight controller at the heliport said, "Will you bring your speed up to one-forty? It would help us. Thank you."

"Look," the pilot said to me. "We're on the radio beam now." He lifted his hands from the controls, and the yellow band of the compass did not waver from its determined position. The runway approach blazed dead ahead of us: a long stem of white lights with horizontal branches at each side, like a Christmas tree. At its

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top were two red-and-white Christmas candles, marking the beginning of the runway; then came two lines of narrow white light, which formed the edges of the runway itself.

At the last moment, the chief pilot switched over to manual. The great machine paused miraculously in its forward motion, as though gathering itself in, then dropped slowly and gently to the tarmac. We taxied across to the pretty white beehive that is the heliport terminal, scraps of paper whirling around us. The pilot kept the rotors turning while a small bus came up for the Glasgow passengers. Lugging their duffelbags, they scurried across to it, crouching and at the double, staggering a little in the downdraft. Once the bus was clear, the pilot switched off the engines. The rotors spun slower and slower, drooping as though exhausted, then came to rest, flopping downward almost to the ground. I took off my headphones. After so much noise, the silence was uncanny.

It took only a few minutes for the bags to arrive in the customs shed, but the delay seemed intolerably long. The men bunched together in silence, staring at the hatch, waiting for the baggage conveyor belt to start. When some bags finally nosed through the hatch, everyone pressed forward at once, not wanting to waste a minute of time back on the blessed beach. The belt stopped, started again, stopped, started once more. Two pieces of luggage bumped slowly into the hall. A young man with short sandy hair and a tired face said, "Last piece off again. Wouldn't you know it?"

An older man in a blue quilted jacket shouldered the other bag and said, "Someone has to be last."

"Why is it always me?" the young man said fretfully.

"I'll buy the first beer," the other man said.

THE Granite City of Aberdeen has absorbed the oil business as easily as it absorbed all the other businesses that have kept it rich over the centuries: the fishing fleets and the whalers, shipbuilding and textiles, farming and cattle-breeding (it is the home of Aberdeen Angus beef), the quarrying and working of granite. As the largest city in northeast Scotland, it is the center for the banks and law offices and insurance companies, for the chartered accountants and investment managers, and all these have gone on flourishing as the cycles

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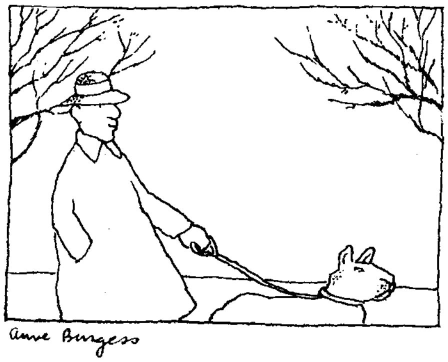
of industry have changed. "They couldna have built these nice granite houses if someone hadna been making money," said Sir Maitland Mackie, who when we met, in 1983, was Lord Lieutenant of Aberdeenshire. Sir Maitland himself lives in a particularly nice granite house, on a secluded street of nice granite houses, not far from Rubislaw Quarry, which until 1971 was the source of Aberdeen's granite and is now a five-hundred-foot hole—reputed to be the deepest quarry in Europe. Vegetation grows from the cracks in its slabs and buttresses; its bottom is flooded; and around its top is a high metal fence to discourage local climbers. But, even though Rubislaw is no longer worked, granite remains the city's dominant building material, almost to the point of obsession: a little shed housing an electric generator, just outside my window in the Altens Skean Dhu Hotel, was faced in granite, and in the bedroom itself—not otherwise distinguishable from any motel room off any American freeway—the table was covered by a plastic sheet of granite look-alike. "Aberdeen comes into its own in the rain," said a melancholy exiled Londoner. Yet this wintry-gray city is filled in the summer with millions of roses—red and pink and yellow and white—lolling their heavy heads in the parks and housing estates, even on the dividers of the ring road around the town. The municipal Department of Development and Tourism claims that Aberdeen has won the Britain in Bloom title so often that "it now stands aside occasionally from the competition so as to encourage others."

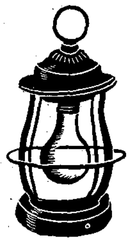
Granite and roses, dourness and wealth: the contrasts of the city are most apparent in the old town, where Aberdeen's famous, ancient university is situated. The old town's narrow, cobbled High Street is lined with granite cottages interspersed with grand professorial mansions, also granite, behind wrought-iron fences and barbered lawns. The university chapel, completed in 1505, has a square tower surmounted by a fretted stone crown; inside, the wooden pews are intricately carved with flowers and birds, oak leaves and acorns. But beyond this peaceful presence is a big modern campus, all steel and glass and concrete, bustling and graceless.

The docks are the same: one side is efficient and shiny-new; the other belongs serenely to an earlier century. Somebody once said that Aberdeen earned its living from fish and chips—from the sea that it faces and the rich agricultural land at its back. But fishing is now a far lesser concern. In the early seventies, just as the oilmen were moving in, a disagreement broke out between the inshore fishermen and the "lumpers"—the fish-market porters. As a result, the fishing fleets moved north to Peterhead and Fraserburgh, boycotting the port of Aberdeen. In Ted Brocklebank's words, "it was as if God had looked down on Aberdeen and said, 'Somehow we have to clear space in the harbor for the oil industry.' " Some fish is still brought down to Aberdeen to be sold in the market, but most of it is landed up the coast, and in the last decade Peterhead has become Britain's largest fishing port. The space cleared by the departure of the trawlermen was bulldozed and rebuilt to the most up-to-date specifications, at a cost of between fifteen and twenty-five million pounds: new piers, new warehouses, new office blocks. The harbor is now crowded with steep-prowed, flat-sterned supply ships and ungainly seismic-survey vessels, their superstructures seemingly top-heavy amidships, where the laboratories and recording instruments are housed. But behind the smart new docks and warehouses and brightly painted oil-storage tanks is a nineteenth-century fishing community: Footdee, three enclosed squares of granite cottages that have walls two feet thick, and tiny, precipitous staircases, and glass panels engraved with schooners or flowers set into their narrow front doors. The houses present blank, windowless backs to both the harbor and the sea, and face inward onto quadrangles like those of an Oxford college. At the center of one of these quadrangles is the community's own tiny chapel; down the middle of the others are lines of little wooden sheds in which the fishermen once kept their gear and which are now used for storage. In the days before running water, Footdee used its own wells, and the massive iron standing pipes are still there, painted bright green, each with a white lion's head at its top, the creature's mouth forever gaping for water that no longer runs. In one of the squares is a ponderous mangle, also freshly painted, its wooden rollers a matching green from damp and disuse. The quadrangles are old and beautiful and extraordinarily peaceful, considering the unceasing activity at their backs; they are mostly occupied by the descendants of the people for whom they were originally built, being passed down like heirlooms from generation to generation, and thus effectively preventing Aberdeen's young professionals from moving in and dragging the place upmarket. On the seaward side of Footdee is a seawall curved like a cornice of snow. Beyond that is a long beach of fine sand, broken by groins and scoured by the east wind. Five hundred miles south, the beach would be a holiday resort, and in deference to that illusion there is a ramshackle funfair and a wide grass promenade. Both were utterly deserted on the bright, cold day when I saw them.



When oil first arrived, there were rumors elsewhere that Calvinist Aberdeen was becoming another Klondike. In reality, it meant that for a brief period men in ten-gallon hats and cowboy boots shivered in the dank hotels; the pubs were crammed with roughnecks and roustabouts; and a few canny locals made killings in real estate. But the American oilmen moved in, made their strikes, and then moved on, often with the innocent stipulation that the fields they had discovered should continue to carry their wives' names. An exasperated American once said to Ted Brocklebank, "You've got all those dumb broads out there in the North Sea—Beatrice, Thelma, Toni, Terri, Maureen, Beryl, Renee, Joanne, Josephine, all those wives of oilmen." But today nobody remembers who they are any more readily than they remember that Brent is the name of a goose.

In Aberdeen itself, the effect of the oil industry has been equally discreet but much more pervasive. Union Street, the city's main thoroughfare, has changed physically almost not at all in the last decade, but its shops are far better stocked than they used to be—the Marks & Spencer shop is one of the best outside London—and are crowded with customers with money to spend. New hotels have been opened and old ones renovated, and there are now several ambitious restaurants of the kind that flourish on expense accounts. But the developments that have made Aberdeen into one of the richest cities in Britain—with one of the lowest unemployment rates and the lowest suicide rate, and real-estate prices nearly as high as London's—are mostly out of sight in new industrial estates at the edges of town, where the oil giants and the hundreds of companies that service them have their headquarters. "We've tended to put the nasty stuff on the periphery of town," Brocklebank said, although by British standards the nasty stuff is not at all nasty; in fact, most of the oil companies' offices are a great deal more elegant and imposing than the blocks going up in London. Chevron, in particular, has risen to the place and the occasion, with a magnificent Highland castle reborn into the twentieth century: gray granite, black slate, and tall pitched roofs to set off the acres of glass.



As for the cowboys, there are still plenty of Stetsons to be seen at the airport, but their wearers, once they've checked into their hotels, seem to leave them behind in their rooms. "You could play 'The Star-Spangled Banner' on every corner in town, and be standing there all by yourself," an American oilman told me. Even so, at the Aberdeen Petroleum Club, out on the Braemar road, where the merchants' Victorian houses are hidden behind stone walls and massed rhododendrons, the American presence has had a powerful effect on the tone of the place and the amenities. The atmosphere is cheerful and informal: members actually greet visitors instead of staring at them with the glacial dismay that is standard in London gentlemen's clubs. Behind the old main building is a brand-new sports complex of pimply brick, with a swimming pool, squash courts, saunas, a billiard room, a restaurant, and a coffee shop, all looking down to the River Dee over an acre of parking lot and a golf driving range. Out on the lawn is a silver-painted barbecue big enough to handle a couple of Texas steers. The place may not be as grand as the Petroleum Club in Houston, I was told, but it is the next-best thing, and is nothing like as expensive.

Oil has not only brought foreign oilmen and foreign money into Aberdeen but also brought back the native sons. For generations, the Scots have been scattered across the globe like the Jews in the Diaspora—five million in Scotland, twenty million elsewhere. In Aberdeen in particular, "there has always been a historic net emigration, because the basic resources of the area have never been able to sustain the population," according to William Adams, the local manager of the Scottish Council for Development and Industry. "Although it has never been as drastic as in the Highlands or in Ireland—there have been no floods, no potato famine—the movement out has been steady, because there was an inherent understanding that there wasn't a job for you when you came out of school or university. The eldest son inherited the farm or the boat or the business, and the others had to carve their own way. This was taken for granted all through the education system. Young men knew that sooner or later they were going to have to catch a train to somewhere else, so they had to have a commodity to take with them, a skill. If they couldn't make it academically, then they made it through the crafts stream—they served their apprenticeship in the shipyards, say, and became marine engineers—because they knew at an early age that their destinies probably lay elsewhere."

The oil industry has changed all that. In a nation debilitated by chronic unemployment, Aberdeen has become a place to find work. Native second sons no longer have to emigrate to Vancouver or Hong Kong or Valparaiso, and the city's population has grown by thirty or thirty-five thousand in the last decade, not all the increase consisting of visiting oil executives. Shell, for example, in collaboration with the local education authority, has started a training plan aimed at catching local lads at sixteen or seventeen and turning them into oilfield technicians. Britain has always been weak on business efficiency but strong on technical invention, and oil now provides an outlet for all that energy and cleverness, much of it the product of the School of Offshore Engineering of Aberdeen's distinguished science college, Robert Gordon's Institute of Technology. Bill Adams told me of one small company—a couple of dozen men, all graduates of R.G.I.T.—that produces underwater television cameras and sells them in places as far away as Australia, and to atomic-energy commissions as well as oil companies, since a camera robust enough to go down an oil well has no trouble in a nuclear reactor. "To my knowledge, they have sent their managing director and sales director twice around the world in the last six months," he said.

The coming of the oil industry also affected local business in subtler, less immediately calculable ways. Sir Maitland Mackie described for me what had happened. "We used to be competitive up here because we were so remote from other markets that we could operate on a low-wage economy," he said. "This kept employment up even during the Great Depression of the thirties. Then the oil boys came in and paid high wages for secretaries, for engineers, for chaps to cater for them on the rigs. And the local industries complained like hell. 'How can we survive?' they said. But, of course, they had to survive, and that meant that they had to start paying much higher wages. They therefore had to look to their efficiency. And that's been good for them, because they have been forced to invest in modern labor-saving equipment. So the curious side effect of the oil industry's arrival in Aberdeen is that it has made local business and industry far more efficient. I hate to think what the economy of this area would have been like without the oil companies."

Sir Maitland has a heavy, noble head, like a Roman marble, with deep lines running from the corners of his small mouth to his chin. His white mustache is carefully trimmed; his eyes, behind spectacles, are bright and amused. He gets on especially well with the American community, not only because he is clever and convivial ("I canna bear to count the numbers of bottles of my vintage port I poured down their throats before they decided to come here," he said) but also because he has the priceless advantage of a wife from Texas. Apart from his many business interests, he owns a large farm, on which he raises beef cattle. After the death of his first wife, he met, in America, a woman who was heir to a special breed of cattle. As she tells the story, their decision to marry was really a decision to mix the herds. Lady Mackie is plump and shrewd, and startlingly informal as the wife of the Lord Lieutenant of the county. On the morning I went to their grand house in Rubislaw Den North, she was wandering around in a battered housecoat, sleeves rolled up, hands wet and glistening with soap bubbles. "We're gettin' ready for a tea party for blind children, and I've got no staff," she said by way of apology. "So I've been scrubbin' on garden furniture." Sir Maitland is equally informal and direct, but he also combines a flair for playing the government establishment for the benefit of the area with the ability to rouse local businessmen into the kind of go-getting activity that indolent British management either avoids or deplores. For example, as soon as the first vague rumors of oil in the North Sea began, he led a seventy-two-strong delegation of local businessmen and industrialists to Houston to discuss joint ventures with the Texas oilmen. As a result of his charm and persuasiveness, a number of American companies, among them Baker Oil Tools, Halliburton, and Vetco, have made Aberdeen the base for their operations in the North Sea. "Being a wealthy farmer and landowner, with business interests in the hydrocarbon industry—he was director of Highland Hydrocarbons, which tried to set up a plant by the Firth of Cromarty—and also being married into the Texas community, Maitland Mackie brings a unique breadth and dimension to the whole enterprise," Ted Brocklebank said. "He has a tremendous respect for the American community, and they for him." In Sir Maitland's study, on a shelf behind his desk, sits one of the many tokens of that respect: a gaudily painted wooden statue of him in a Stetson hat, with his knobbly knees protruding between his cowboy boots and his kilt.

Sir Maitland's success is the success story of the whole area, but of the many individual success stories about those who saw their chance when oil came, and grabbed it ferociously, the most spectacular is that of the late Robert B. Farquhar (pronounced Farker), whose company now builds, among other things, the topside structures for oil installations. Bob Farquhar was born in 1921 and left school when he was thirteen. "Mi mither couldna afford to feed me," he said. He worked on a farm, where his wages were eight pounds for six months, and then became a laborer for Wimpey, the construction firm. When the war came, he joined the Royal Navy and was shipped out to India. After he was demobbed, he bought himself a horse and cart and travelled the countryside selling bags of firewood. With the money he made from that, and a sixty-five-pound gratuity from the Navy, he bought a secondhand truck. In postwar Britain, there were shortages of everything, and the whole country was in a state of disrepair, so Farquhar began to diversify and expand: he built henhouses, sheds, garages, and greenhouses. "Ye couldna gae wrong," he said. He set up a timberyard, and by 1953 he had won contracts to supply pit props to the National Coal Board and sleepers to the railways. Although the Beeching plan for rail began, in 1963, shutting down hundreds of miles of track, his business continued to prosper. It was a short step from sheds and garages to prefabricated houses (his company now owns a couple of holiday-chalet parks), and from there to mobile living accommodations for industrial sites.

When the first rumors of oil in the North Sea began to circulate, Farquhar went down to Aberdeen airport to watch the Americans arrive. He was impressed. "If ye couldna see 'em, ye could hear 'em," he said. "They were nae there for the fun of it." He had turned fifty by then, but was as energetic and hungry as ever. He was one of Sir Maitland's first group that went to Houston to press the flesh and set up contracts, but his big break came, he said, when he won a contract from the local authority for the Grampian region to build a hundred mobile homes to accommodate the huge influx of oil workers moving into the area. Because his prices were competitive and he delivered on time, the oil companies took him up. He provided them with mobile homes, prefabricated office buildings, and site accommodations all over northeastern Scotland. When work on the Sullom Voe oil terminal, in the Shetlands, was begun, he built accommodation units and also a complete air-terminal building on the nearby island of Unst. In order to ferry the units out there, he chartered a cargo ship large enough to carry whole houses. He had come a long way from bags of firewood and a horse and cart.

brigitte
LUNCH
DINNER
Waitzman

Farquhar's efficient performance in the Shetlands made his reputation solid with the oil companies, and he was ready for the next and most profitable step—the manufacture of prefabricated topside modules for offshore installations. He began by building living quarters and went on to more specialized constructions—kitchens, hospitals, dive-control cabins, laboratories, darkrooms, helicopter-control and radio rooms. His modules are now exported to offshore sites all over the globe—to the Middle East and the Far East, to Alaska, Australia, and the Gulf of Mexico. His company also has major contracts with Shell, British Petroleum, Britoil, and Chevron for the maintenance and refurbishment of their existing offshore accommodations.

The Farquhar factory is in Huntly, a quiet little town in the rolling farming country northwest of Aberdeen, along the road to Inverness. When I stopped at the edge of town to ask the way, I was told laconically, "Ye canna miss it. It's the big one." Big, perhaps, but not built for show. The main office is two stories high and looks prefabricated; its corridors are narrow and its décor is strictly utilitarian. Bob Farquhar himself was also unlike any stock image of a multimillionaire. He was a small, Dickensian figure in a crumpled tweed suit: pot-bellied, red-faced, with big lips, jowls, two chins, and a full head of steel-gray hair. He shook my hand vigorously, eyed me rapidly up and down, and said, "Let's gae u'steers an' ha' a noos."

"Pardon?"

Farquhar beamed, "Ay, a noos. A chat."

Later, I gathered that his impenetrable brogue was renowned. When Sir Maitland Mackie visited a trade fair in Birmingham, the local mayor begged him to go with him to the Farquhar stand to act as an interpreter. "But the mayor spoke with a hell of an accent himself, so I had to interpret for both of them," Sir Maitland said. He sighed. "I suspect Bob put it on a little."

Upstairs was a long corridor lined with closed doors. Farquhar nodded at them and said, "That's wheer mi laddies work—planners, surveyors, engineers, and sales chappies. Ay, an' we've e'en got one of those computer things." He shuddered dramatically, then winked at me.

At the center of the table in the

boardroom, where we talked, was a delicate glass model of an oil rig, under a glass dome. On a shelf in a corner was a painted scale model of a schooner—a present from his accountant, Farquhar said. But the rest of the room was bare, and the surface of Farquhar's desk at the end of the conference table was uncluttered except for a telephone. I did not see the other offices, but I had the impression that this room was Farquhar's one gesture to formality in the whole building.

As we talked, Farquhar's brogue seemed gradually to clear. I wondered if Sir Maitland was right or if I was adjusting to the foreign language. Or maybe I was responding to his enthusiasm, which was no more intense about his multimillion-dollar contracts with the oil companies than about the comparatively small businesses he acquired along the way: a leisure center in the Trossachs; the King George V Garden Centre, in Huntly; and the Gordon Arms Hotel, also in Huntly. "I make a point of gaeing in there regularly. I watch the folk eat, then ask them if the meal's a'reet. Customers like a bit of attention. An' it keeps me going, you see. Ye ha' to keep going."

While we were talking, one of Farquhar's assistants called over the loudspeaker telephone to discuss a Japanese deal. Farquhar repeated the sum slowly, with no brogue at all: "One point seven six, did ye say? That's a tidy sum." He shrugged, and raised his eyebrows, the puir wee laddie astonished at his success. But when the assistant began to discuss the details of the deal Farquhar switched off the loudspeaker, answered in monosyllables, grunted, and made notes on a pad of paper he took from a desk drawer. After he hung up, he tapped the pad and said, "I'm sixty-two, and I'm beginning to forget. I used to keep it all locked up in mi heid, now I have to write things down. Age . . ." He gave me a withering look. He had had problems with his circulation, he said, and the doctors told him that both his legs might have to be amputated. "But I wouldna believe them, so they gave me new veins, and now I'm as good as new."

Farquhar told me that in the early days his wife had worked as hard as he did, keeping the books, running things when he was away. Now they had two other directors for the company, and a staff of two hundred and thirty. "I think I've done mi bit," he said. "I'm gaeing to try to spend muir time wi' the wife. I used to leave at nine in the morning, and she saw me again at ten at night. But now I've bought a house here in Huntly, and I get haim for lunch. I want to sit back a wee bit, but I always feel I need to be here looking over people. I've got good management and it can run wi'oot me, but I like to think it canna. Unless you watch 'em, they spend money like it grows on trees. Still and a', I'm glad I'm not in Aberdeen. Oot here in a rural area, there's nae problems with labor or unions. Country people are happy to do a job in these hard times and get haim to the wife and bairns. And I'll tell you something else: I drive a Rolls-Royce and naebody grudges me. When my first Rolls was delivered, the men a' came oot of the factory and wished me health to drive it. They know I'm the one who's taking the risks."

A more public recognition of the risks that Farquhar negotiated on the way to his Rolls-Royce and multimillion-dollar turnover was a plaque on the wall naming him Scottish Industrialist of the Year, 1981. I asked him why he had succeeded when so many other local businessmen had made fortunes out of the oil boom and lost them again.

"I watched what I was aboot," he answered. "Them buggers in Aberdeen, their bowlers didna fit their heids and doon they went."

As we went down to the lobby, I asked him if he really thought he would sit back now and take it easy.

"Wai-ill." He drew the word out. "In a coupla days, I'm off to Nova Scotia and Newfoundland." He winked again. "I keep mi ear to the groond, ye see."

A LONDONER'S conception of the British Isles is bottom-heavy, like one of those nursery figures that can be rocked but never tipped over; Scotland seems like a distant, foreign province, and even Edinburgh, "the Athens of the North," feels as far off as Copenhagen and a good deal less cosmopolitan. But Shetland is genuinely the end of the line, even for the Scots. It is a remote community—of seventeen thousand when the oil came—nearer to the Arctic Circle than to London, and with tenuous links to the rest of the country and vague aspirations to independence, particularly from Scotland. Its closest connections are with Norway, where many of the early settlers, local customs, and place-names originated. "But Shetland isn't Norway or Scotland or Orkney," said a pale young Shetlander named Stuart Robertson, who works for B.P. at Sullom Voe. "It has a steady independence—nothing wild. We have our own traditions and identity, and we want to keep them. There was no television here until 1964, no BBC2 until 1977. And that was fine by us." And Ted Brocklebank said, "Shetlanders are a Nordic people, like the Icelanders. Scotland happens to be the nearest link they have to hospitals and such amenities. But, really, they are quite happy on their own." Peter Guy, a former R.A.F. officer who came to Shetland, fell in love with the place, bought himself a house on the island of Yell, and now works for B.P., said, "It's a land of realities. There is no room for flannel, for posturing. It's too exposed in every sense, and too remote—eighteen hours by ship from the mainland, one hour by plane if the weather permits, and it often doesn't. Yet the people are seafarers, so they have seen the world. Most of my neighbors on Yell know the Falklands better than they know Edinburgh. And there are some old Shetlanders who have been to Hong Kong but have never visited the other parts of Shetland. Once they are home, they stay put. They are a self-sufficient people."

FLEA
MARKET
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Shetland maintained its independence thanks to three quietly flourishing industries—fishing, fish-processing, and knitwear. Then came the oil, turning the islands first into a staging post to the offshore fields and then into a landfall—a terminal where the oil was piped ashore—and bringing with it wealth and, in places, what Brocklebank called "the unacceptable face of the oil industry."

The Shetlands consist of one large island, the mainland, with two rather smaller islands immediately to its north—Yell and Unst—and dozens of little islands scattered around its rocky coastline, some of them inhabited, like Foula and Whalsay, some of them no more than lumps of rocks washed by the sea. As a group, the Shetlands are shaped like a jagged dagger pointing south, with a large pommel that slopes down from northeast to southwest. The blade is the narrow southern strip between Lerwick, the capital, and Sumburgh, at the southernmost tip—a bleak, woebegone area, made even bleaker by haphazard new development. Just north of Sumburgh Airport, the huge tropospheric scatter receivers that connect offshore-radio traffic with the Aberdeen telephone system perch along a ridge of hills like invading Martians spying out the land. When I was there, in July, the roadside was thick with buttercups and daisies and flowering white clover, and beyond the dry-stone walls were fields of yellow marsh irises and brilliant patches of poppies. But scattered randomly across hem, like an impetigo, were drab little houses, most of them apparently preabricated, all of them seemingly impermanent, although they were probably there to stay.

Seagulls squabbled for scraps in the middle of the road, then rose, angrily complaining, from in front of the hirecar's wheels. Yet the coastline, even in he dingy south of the island, was xtraordinary: a bay, an inlet, a headand, another bay—a coastline like ern. A reddish headland shone in the un, a belt of purple mist across its middle. The cliffs in the distance were washed in blue. Then the road turned nland and crossed moorland cropped y sheep and cut by peaty streams beore dropping down to Lerwick—row fter featureless row of gray houses, ecoming older but no less gray or eatureless the closer they were to the enter of town and the harbor. At the ockside were a hotel, a couple of pubs nd cafés, a shop that sold videotapes, nd acres of warehouses, some of them ery large and very new. A roll-on, oll-off passenger ferry was tied up mong the fishing boats. Out in the reat, glittering bay, half a dozen fishactory ships lay at anchor—German, Norwegian, Russian—waiting to buy rom the local trawlermen.

North of Lerwick, the road was mpty and the countryside was what it ad always been: rolling moors swept lean by the wind, sheep scattered cross them, sheep on the road, little arms—called crofts—few and far be-

No. 4

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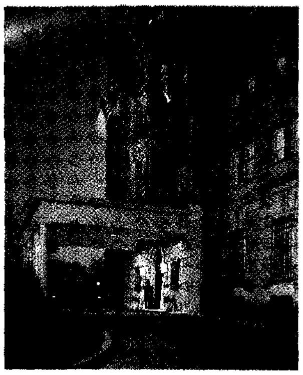

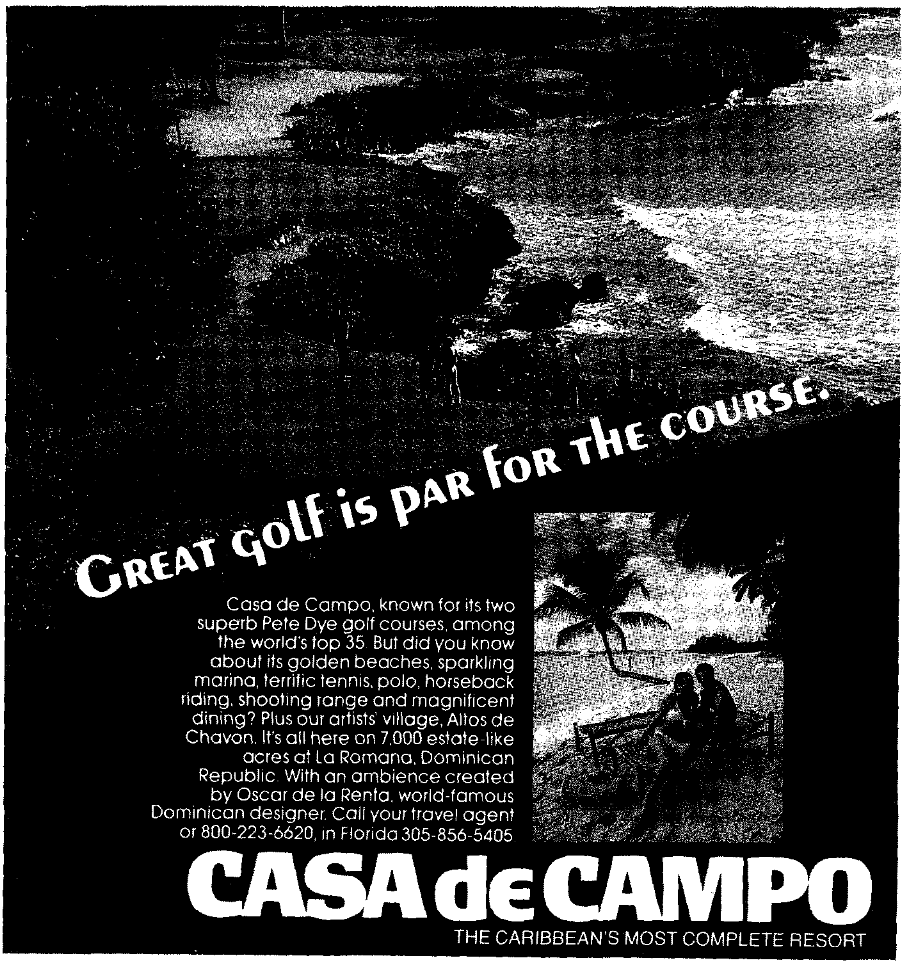

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tween, villages fewer and farther. Once in a while, a truck thundered south on its way from the oil terminal at Sullom Voe. Apart from the trucks and their drivers, I saw no one for twenty miles—until the road forked and I went right when I should have gone left. A couple of miles on, I saw a figure striding along the road who looked as I imagined every young Shetlander would look: ruddy complexion, innocent blue eyes, a shotgun over his shoulder, a dead rabbit dangling from his left hand. I pulled over and asked him the way to Hillswick, speaking slowly and clearly, because of my English accent. He answered in purest Bow-Bells Cockney: "Sorry, squire. Yerl 'avter gow back."

A few miles farther on, on a desolate stretch between Brae and Hillswick, with nothing but rolling moorland spotted with gray tarns, and not a house in sight, I saw far off another figure marching purposefully along carrying a suitcase. It was a young black man in a New York Yankees bomber jacket; the suitcase was an outsize stereo-recorder, playing full blast He did not return my wave as I passed

All these outsiders were lured to the Shetlands by Europe's biggest industrial development in the nineteen-seventies: the multimillion-pound deepwater terminal that currently handles a million two hundred thousand barrels of oil a day, which is half o Britain's daily North Sea output and is reputedly worth a gross one million pounds an hour to the producing companies. But to the ordinary visitor the terminal might hardly exist. It i tucked away on the far northeast edge of Sullom Voe, the great inlet tha separates the dagger's pommel from it handle—a bleak, empty area, with nothing to attract the fly-fishermen and ornithologists and amateur archeologists who, apart from the oilmen are the only people who make the long journey to Shetland. "Sullom Voe wa one of our black spots," said Ian Clark, who was chief officer of th Zetland County Council when the oi companies decided to bring the oi ashore in Shetland. "It had been an Air Force base during the war, and was really run-down. So the good Lord was kind to us when He put th deep water in a place that was alread wasted. That's what you call forwar planning."

If the Shetlanders believed in th cult of personality—and they vehemently do not—there would now b a statue to Clark in the center c

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TOPNOTCH
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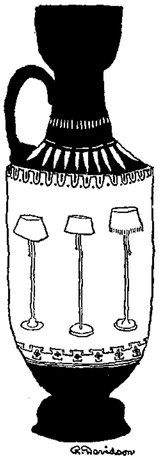
Lerwick, for it was he who, almost single-handed, transformed the arrival of oil in the islands from what might have been a social and environmental disaster into a source of great wealth for the whole community. Clark eventually became a managing director of joint ventures for Britoil, an oil company in which the government has a forty-nine-per-cent share, and we met at Stornoway House, Britoil's stately London headquarters, just around the corner from St. James's Park. A sleek, lone receptionist sat behind an elegant desk in the reception hall, which was paved in black-and-white marble; the atmosphere was hushed and calm. Not so Ian Clark. He is strong-voiced, purposeful, good-natured, and tough, like a warrior-monk on a medieval crusade. One of his front teeth hangs down in front of the others, making his smile seem jagged and oddly fierce. He laughs easily and often, and his laugh resonates through the deeply carpeted corridors like an underwater explosion. A large, comfortable stomach and a shock of white hair make him seem, at first glance, twenty years older than he is—forty-four. But his face is not much lined, and even when he is sitting quietly behind a desk he buzzes with youthful energy.

Clark is a Lowlander, not a Shetlander, born and raised in industrial Lanarkshire, just outside Glasgow. He left school at fifteen and went to work in a firm of chartered accountants. In his spare time, he took a correspondence course to qualify as a certified accountant ("Britoil constantly boasts that I'm the only certified person here," he said), and then he moved into local government. He spent fifteen months in Kirkcaldy as senior internal auditor, then five years in Berwickshire, where he rose to the rank of deputy treasurer. In 1968, he moved to Shetland. "The attraction of Shetland for me was twofold," he said. "One, I reckoned that it might survive the reorganization of local government that was being talked about at that time. Two, in 1968 I was a mere twenty-nine-year-old, and I knew that no other local authority was going to offer me a chief officer's post."

In the four years between Clark's arrival in Shetland and the oil companies' decision to build an oil terminal there, he became a major figure in the community. He cajoled the central government into funding a roll-on, roll-off vehicle ferry service between Aberdeen and Lerwick—"a dream the islanders had had since the early fifties which had never materialized." More important, the islanders trusted him. "I was regarded as someone who was working for the community," he said. "I think it mattered that I have a very, very strong religious background. All my life, until I came back from Shetland, I was linked with the Plymouth Brethren, so the islanders knew me to be a committed Christian. And, between my church activities, my reading, and my work, I didn't have a great deal of time or appetite for socializing. That meant that I was working away to get things done and was not seen by them to be linked with any particular grouping. I was regarded as being somehow above all that, a sort of pure-white man. So when the pressures began to build, and outside parties tried to stir things up, the community never lost faith in the fact that—whether I was right or wrong—I was working in their interests." He hesitated, as though catching himself out in some immodesty. Then he added, "There are two other things that worked to my advantage: when oil broke, in 1972, I was thirty-three, so I had all the vigor of a young man to meet a very heavy burden. But I looked fifty-three. My hair turned white when I was in my twenties, and I've always had a middle-aged tummy. So I was a sort of father figure to them." His laugh erupted briefly, and the faint typing in the next room stopped for a moment as if disturbed by the shock waves.

Clark continued, "I knew that if I was going to cope properly with the coming of oil it would no longer be a job but an all-consuming vocation. I suppose I could have gone to sleep and no one would have noticed, but that didn't seem right. I spent a lot of time in prayer. Finally, I came across some verses in Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians: 'Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters . . . but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men.' And I thought, Well, there you are—the greatest service I can do my Maker is in trying to serve the community in this way. So, in all due modesty, I prayed, 'Lord, there's no way I can do this on my own. But I'm willing to try, so I'd better get some help from You!' " Another explosion of laughter.



From that point on, Clark worked seven days a week. From Monday to Friday, he was in his office from eight in the morning until six in the evening; then he went home, ate his dinner, and worked until ten. On Saturdays, he worked at home from 8 A.M. to one o'clock and from 7 P.M. until nine-thirty. On Sundays, he worked most afternoons and all evening. "I told my wife it kept us from quarrelling," he said. The purpose of his labors was to protect Shetland from a threefold risk: to the environment, to the economy, and to the social fabric of the community. As he saw it, if the oil companies moved in on their own terms a few people might make a lot of money in a short time but the islands would be spoiled, the community would be divided, and local industries would fail, because their workers would be lured into high-paying temporary jobs in oil. He decided that the only way to prevent this was to join the oil companies not as a subordinate but as a partner, sharing in both the cost of the development and the profits from it, and to maintain control in a simple, feudal manner by owning the land on which the development would take place. He also decided that the oil companies should contribute "disturbance payments"—a kind of tax based on the tonnage of oil and gas exported from the terminal—which would go into a charitable trust fund to be used to relieve social hardship, support local industries, and act as a cushion against the time when the oil companies eventually moved out.

It was an audacious, improbable plan. Even national governments find it hard to cope adequately with the oil giants, and the Zetland County Council was, in Clark's words, "a sleepy, wee local authority, one of the smallest in the whole of Scotland." But Clark himself was anything but sleepy; he was confident, clever, and utterly unfazed by the high-powered company he suddenly found himself keeping. This is how he described what happened: "While the rest of Britain was going into recession, the Shetlands were knowing their greatest prosperity in this century. The fishing was good, the fish-processing was good, the knitwear was good. Everything was coming together, and the attitude was buoyant. So I said to the oil industry, 'We don't need you, and the community doesn't want you. But we recognize that if there is a lot of oil out there you will do your calculations and *you* will decide whether it's cheaper to take the oil direct to the mainland or bring it ashore here. If your calculations tell you to take it to the mainland, you will do that, and even if we wanted you we couldn't attract you. And if your calculations tell you it's cheaper to use Shetland we will be pressured into letting you come even though we don't want you, because the nation needs the oil. So we will not embark on an internal argument about whether or not we should have you. What we are going to discuss internally is this: If we are unfortunate enough to have to welcome you, on what terms will you be welcome? First,' I said, 'we are going to protect the environment, so you can forget all about your single-user terminals.' That upset them. 'Nowhere in the world do companies not have their own terminals,' they said. 'Nowhere in the world?' I answered. 'If you want to use Shetland, it will be the first time in the history of the world that there will be a joint-user terminal. Second, when the oil is offshore or in the terminal the risk of pollution is not all that great. The danger comes when the vessels are being loaded. So we are going to be the Ports and Harbors Authority, in order to oversee safety. Next, you can forget all about planning permissions, planning consents, et cetera. One would have to be a genius to foresee all the things that have to be provided against, so planning control is *not* going to be sufficient. Instead, we are going to take ownership of the land on which you build, so that we can have an ongoing landlord's control. In fact, we are going to participate in the development in a form that gives us a direct say and a direct influence over it.'

"At that time, I was talking about a fifty-fifty company to develop a terminal, which they had costed at fifty million pounds. So I went down to the City of London and made sure that I could raise more than twenty-five million. (Actually, I could have raised sixty million.) Then I went back home and didn't reveal this to anyone. When Francis McFadzean, the chairman of Shell, flew up to Lerwick, he told me the fifty-fifty company was absurd—we Shetlanders would never be able to afford it. I answered, 'Let me make you an offer. You tell me how much money I will need to raise and give me forty-eight hours. If I can raise it in that time, you take me on as an equal partner; if not, I'll forget all about it.' But, of course, he wouldn't look at it. He knew I would not say that without having taken out insurance. So they tried another tack. They invited me and Mr. Blance, the Convenor of the Council, to a joint meeting of the companies at Shell Centre, in London. They told us that our price was so high that they had decided they could not afford it and would not, after all, be coming to Shetland. I answered, 'First of all, I want to give you our warm congratulations. I am very impressed that you have the technical ability to bring the crude direct to the mainland of Scotland on an economic basis. Second, I give you even warmer thanks and assure you that when the Convenor and I return to Shetland and announce that the oil industry has decided not to make its home there we will appear as heroes. And, third, if we can introduce you to any of our colleagues in local authorities in Scotland we will be delighted to do so. Our relationship to date has not been the most harmonious, and I consider it absolutely delightful that it is ending on this friendly note. So before we undo any of that I think the Convenor and I should take our farewells of you. Please, gentlemen, be assured that you have our infinite gratitude. We thank you on behalf of the entire Shetland community.' So we stood up to leave, but before we got to the door we were pushed back into our seats and told that of course they had got to come to Shetland." A pause. A seismic explosion of laughter. "At that point, they had rather disturbed the negotiating balance."

As a result of that meeting, an Oil Liaison Committee was set up by the Council and the industry in 1974. In the same year, the Zetland County Council Act, designed by Clark to give him the necessary powers to control the whole development, was passed by Parliament. The Act gave the Council everything that Clark had wanted: the right to acquire land, to invest in commercial undertakings, to license construction, and to act as the Port Authority at Sullom Voe. The Council would make land available for the terminal, provide harbor facilities, and build a village for the construction workers; in exchange, it would receive disturbance payments from the industry.

The disturbance payments, designed to provide for the future prosperity of the community after the oil had gone, provoked another confrontation in London, which Clark also recounted with glee. "Mr. Blance and I were called down to see the Secretary of State for Scotland, who was at that time Willy Ross," he said. "And Willy Ross said that he had received complaints from the oil companies about us, and he read us a wee lecture. So the Convenor had his say, and Ross read us a further lecture. Then I said, 'Secretary of State, I am very confused. My understanding has always been that the oil industry is the most powerful industry, if not the most powerful grouping, in the whole world, and the Shetland Islands Council is one of the smallest and weakest local authorities in the whole of Scotland. I had assumed that the Secretary of State for Scotland was responsible for local government. Now, had you been making these noises to the oil industry in order to protect the Shetland Islands Council from it, *that* I could have understood. But to the Shetland Islands Council on behalf of the oil industry!' And Ross laughed, and said, 'All I'm saying to you is "Be reasonable!" ' I answered, 'Secretary of State, would you care to define "reasonable"?' 'Away back up to Lerwick, Mr. Clark,' he said. 'You know full well what reasonable is. Just be reasonable.' At that point, I knew we had won the game: the industry had thought they were playing their ace, and their ace had been trumped. So we negotiated the disturbance payments, which have already brought tens of millions of pounds to the islands."

One of the oilmen most closely involved in the negotiations with Clark was John Heaney, who at the time was the technical director of Shell Expro and the driving force behind the creation of the pipeline from Brent to Sullom Voe. Heaney is now in his middle fifties, a resolute man with a slightly squashed face and dark-blue eyes that curve Orientally when he narrows them. He was on two expeditions to the grim islands of the South Atlantic before he joined Shell, and subsequently worked for the company all over the globe. When I met him, he was dividing his time between fruit farming in Essex and running Saxon Oil, an independent company he helped to form in 1980, when he retired from Shell. He is efficient, hard, and fit—he walks with the air of someone who could walk unbothered all day—but even he seemed uneasy when he recalled the negotiations with Clark.

I asked him how the Shetland Islands Council had managed to call all the shots, despite its weakness and the power of the oil companies.

"It was not just one company in the negotiations, it was the whole industry," he answered. "What you must appreciate is that, while we were pioneering on all sorts of fronts, we felt that wherever possible we had to employ conventional, well-tried techniques. It was a question of prudence. You must minimize your risks whenever you can, and go in for the real frontier stuff only when there is no proved alternative. Now, people understand pumping oil to shore and handling it in tank farms, as they are called. So the industry collectively felt it had to try its best to get the crude to Shetland. Perhaps it would have been different if it had been just one company head to head with Clark. But as an industry we never called his bluff."

It is characteristic of the Shetlanders that the first of them to benefit when the money began to flow were the exposed and underprivileged. The old-age pensioners, who had stuck it out when the going was hard, were allotted a special bonus each Christmas. The disabled were provided with hand-controlled Volvos to replace their unstable little National Health three-wheeled invalid cars, which were death traps in the fierce winds that scour the islands. "Using the money in that way drew the community together psychologically," Clark said. After he left Shetland, more grandiose schemes were begun—Lerwick now has a three-million-pound sports complex, the largest building on the island—and even Clark was unable to prevent locals from being lured into oil-related jobs that paid three or four times what they had previously earned. Since oil arrived in Shetland, the roads are better, the schools are better, the drainage is better, but life generally is more expensive, and the indigenous industries have declined, despite all Clark's efforts.

Some people think there has also been a falling off in less tangible ways. Brian Lappin is an Esso man who was seconded to Shell Expro to become the first industry chairman of the Sullom Voe Association. Even now, a decade later, when he talks about his meetings with the islanders to discuss the landfall of North Sea oil and the construction of the terminal, his formal, boardroom circumlocution cannot quite disguise his distaste for and dismay at the recollection of all that stern horse-trading. "There wasn't really a high degree of community of viewpoint between these two groups of people who had to act together," he said. "I think it is also true to say that the oil companies didn't really anticipate with great skill or reasonableness the degree of resistance or restraint or control that the island community was expecting to exercise over the oil companies' activities. To say that the companies were high-handed is perhaps an unreasonable conclusion, but certainly the community and its representatives regarded them as high-handed almost by definition. That was really their starting point. So, yes, the early days were"—he cleared his throat—"quite difficult. In the end, we worked it all out, and gave them what they asked for to the best of our ability. Even so, not everything is perfect. Traditional Shetlanders insist that the outlook of people on the islands has been affected. Up until the early seventies, Shetland was so remote and the maintenance of life was such a hard task for everybody that there was a tremendous feeling of community: if a person or a family got into trouble, the others would rally round and take them through the bad time. It is put to me that now that sort of friendship with one's neighbors, which had its origins in real necessity, has been eroded. People have become more inward-looking and selfish, less caring about the interests of others."

Like many of the ways that oil is rumored to have changed life in the Shetlands, none of this is immediately obvious to the visitor. For example, above the St. Magnus Bay Hotel, at Hillswick, is a crafts shop that sells beautiful local knitwear and ugly little sealskin money purses. The shop is the front room of a cottage owned by Ivimey McKenzie, a talkative old lady who needs two walking sticks to hob-

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ble around her house and can no longer negotiate the hill down to the village store. She told me she had come north from Glasgow because her daughter had married a Shetlander, and when the young couple emigrated to Canada she herself had stayed on. Now she makes do for company with two small dogs, a shelty and a café-au-lait terrier, with whom she carries on lengthy, animated conversations. But she was never lonely, she said. “In summer, I have my customers, and they come in all shapes and sizes,” she told me. “The other day, I had two naval officers in here. Weighed down with gold braid, they were. But ye couldna get a smile out of either of them, and they didna buy a thing. Then ye get the laddies from the oil companies, all trussed up in their business suits, puir dears.” But in a remote spot like Hillswick business is never brisk, and in winter, when there are only four hours of daylight, Mrs. McKenzie sometimes sees no customers for weeks on end. Her neighbors, however, look in on her all the time. They do her shopping for her—one was there with a basket of groceries when I arrived—and when that excuse is lacking they simply stop by for a cup of tea and conversation. “They look after me,” Mrs. McKenzie said. “They look after one another. That’s what they’re like up here.”

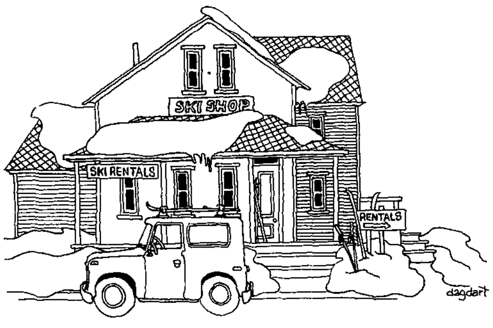
The closeness among Shetlanders is based on concern, not on gossipy village curiosity. But it has an odd and inconvenient side effect: outside Lerwick, there are hardly any public houses. And in Britain the pub is an institution—not a shadowy place to get drunk in, like an American bar, but a social center where the locals gather at the end of the day to chat over their warm beer. Pubs have darts teams and shove-ha’penny teams that carry the village flag in competitions around the district. The pub is where the football and cricket teams pin up the list of players for their next match, and where village outings are organized, village news is disseminated. But not in Shetland. There was a lively pub in Hillswick, a low stone building by the jetty, and I saw another in Brae. Apart from them, there seemed to be none in the villages and hamlets scattered around the mainland.

I asked Ian Clark how such a society managed to survive without this most traditional of British community centers.

He answered, “The social fabric is so strong you don’t need them. Most Shetland houses are as well stocked as pubs, and you know someone regards you as a close friend when he walks in without knocking while you are reading your newspaper in the evening, sits himself down, and takes a drink with you. It’s a sign of friendship. Who needs pubs when you can wander in and out of one another’s houses?”

As well as its pub, Hillswick has the St. Magnus Bay Hotel, one of just two good hotels north of Lerwick. (The other is the Busta House, near Brae.) The St. Magnus is a big white-painted wooden mansion that was built in Norway in the eighteen-nineties and shipped across to Shetland around 1900. The interior is all creaking, varnished pine, like a house in a Chekhov play, and some of the staff have a matching Russian eccentricity. Des, the young headwaiter, was an intense bean pole of an Englishman, whose father was the mayor of Eastbourne—a placid and well-heeled holiday resort on the English south coast—and whose sister worked for the British Council in Belgrade. When I asked him why he was in Shetland, he shrugged despondently and said, “There’s always work in the catering trade,” and explained that he had a Cordon Bleu diploma and had once worked on a project for the Roux brothers, London’s most influential chefs. This seemed merely to deepen the mystery of what he was doing in Hillswick, although it did explain why he fussed inordinately over the way the simple meals were presented and why his eyes lit up when he talked about claret. He also talked, with equal passion, about archery and, more dreamily, about the restaurant he was going to open once he had accumulated some capital. “In the south somewhere,” he said wistfully, like Olga, in “The Three Sisters,” yearning for Moscow. “Definitely in the south.” Shetland, apparently, was not part of his dream.

This was not true of the hotel manager, a dark, bearded, diffident Glaswegian who had spent five years offshore working as a maintenance engineer—an experience that had earned him a lot of money and two nervous breakdowns. “I’d work for three days at a stretch if something important gave out,” he said. “Three days, three nights without a break. I’d say to them, ‘Just let me have twelve hours’ sleep and I’ll finish it quicker.’ But they never could. Having machinery out of action costs too much. I cracked up twice and then I quit.” With the money he had saved, he bought himself a seventeenth-century Shetland croft with stone walls four feet thick and thirty acres of land. “I love it in Shetland. It’s another world, and I never want to leave. My children go to the local school: forty kids in four classes—individual tuition, more or less. There’s nothing like Scottish education. But . . .” His voice trailed away and he looked around restlessly, his nervousness seemingly undiminished by the idyll of this new life. “But it gets very lonely at times, particularly if the snow comes and stays.” We were talking in the lobby. Behind him, framed by the glass doors of the hotel, two boats bobbed on the bright water just offshore. Beyond them was the great sweep of St. Magnus Bay, ridge after blue ridge reaching out into the sea, the spray rising peacefully, far off, around their feet. The day was hot and cloudless. He made a gesture with his hand, outward and upward, as though to obliterate the scene. “There are three things you need up here that might seem luxuries anywhere else,” he said. “A car, a deep freeze, and a citizens-band radio.” A pause. “There’s not much light in winter,” he said. “You have to be able to keep in touch.”



“Shetland is a dream or a nightmare,” Ted Brocklebank had warned me, and even the locals say that it has nine months of winter and three months of bad weather. But in July of 1983 the sun shone without a break, the breeze was gentle, and the thermometer hovered around seventy degrees, which in Shetland is a heat wave. It was like Paradise with a temperate climate—silent and unpopulated and astonishingly beautiful. For three days after I settled into the hotel, I drove and walked—at the start to see if the horror stories I had heard about the impact of the oil industry on the islands were true, and then simply for the pleasure of it. I first drove northwest to Esha Ness, which even the Shetlanders, who are spoiled in these matters, call a beauty spot. There is a lighthouse at its westerly point and, behind that, a huge, dark zawn, an inlet in the cliff, its steep sides reddish-black and overhanging. On the shingle at the back of the zawn lay a crumpled black car and a bright-pink fishing buoy, small as toys against the boulders. I walked around the rim of the zawn, then northward along the cliff tops past a headland tunnelled through by the sea to form a gloomy arch, and past Drid Geo, Moo Stack, and the Villians of Ure—all of them pieces of rock of varying sizes that stick out from the sea just beyond the cliffs. The turf was smooth and springy, thick with sea pinks. Farther north was a squatter, squarer arch, which looked as if the land had stepped forward and planted a great booted leg in the Atlantic.

In two hours' walk, I saw only one other person—a man walking toward me, camera and binoculars slung around his neck, rucksack on his back. We nodded to each other in a friendly way but did not speak, both of us unwilling to break the silence of this remote place. The only sounds were the waves beating on the rocks, the wind over the grass, and the gulls crying. When a dog barked, just once, from a croft inland, it sounded as loud and unexpected as a gunshot. At the Head of Stanshi, just beyond the Grind of the Navir—another lump of rock sticking out of the water—the angle of the cliffs eased, and they became brownish slabs sloping peacefully down into the sea. Four seals were sunning themselves at the water's edge, but they saw me sooner than I saw them. One slithered into the sea, arched, plunged, and disappeared. The others—father, mother, and half-grown pup—slipped warily closer to the water, then lay back and went on sunbathing, watching me all the while. It seemed a reasonable precaution, considering the ominous little billboards outside cottages on the road from Lerwick advertising "Sealskin Crafts." The seals' coats were brownish, like the seaweedy rocks, and they lay with their hind flippers raised and neatly crossed, as though about to applaud.

The next day, I drove south to Muckle Roe, a sparsely populated island that dangles below the handle of the Shetland dagger, connected to it by a short causeway. The cliffs were lower and gentler than at Esha Ness, and more vividly colored: orange-and-yellow rock dropping into orange, sandy coves. The day was windless, hot, and sticky; the sea glinted like sheet steel. I followed a vague footpath up and down, across headlands, past little coves, while the nesting gulls screeched at me. A pair of black-and-white oystercatchers with long, orange bills followed me for about a mile, crying unceasingly—a high, anxious note—circling, landing, circling. When I returned to the cove, not far from my parked car, there was a family group on the beach, enjoying the sun: two small, solemn children and three hefty young women, one with a thick braid of red hair down her back. A fourth woman had waded into the glassy sea and stood there hugging herself, the water up to the middle of her thighs. She was wearing what looked like white thermal underwear that left only her forearms exposed. She was perfectly still, outlined against the dazzle like one of Seurat's bathers. Suddenly, she ducked under the water—in and out, once only—and let out a great Scottish wail of anguish: "Aaa-ooo!" Her companions watched in silence, waved to me when I waved, but uttered not a word. It was as though the emptiness and the beauty of the place swallowed people up, making language an intrusion, an impertinence. In that engulfing nullity, the social fabric would need to be strong.

The emptiness of Shetland seems eerie at first—until the reason for it becomes blindingly obvious: there are almost no trees on the islands, nor are there any bushes. Remnants of dwarf birch and willow have been found buried deep in the peat, but the wind and the salt and the sheep destroyed the trees centuries ago, leaving a landscape without foreground, without focus, just rolling moorland dotted with sheep and broken occasionally by low, sculptured, curving terraces, like archeological digs, where the peat has been dug out. Here and there, bright-colored sacks of peat wait by the side of the road to be collected.

Here and there, too, are little cemeteries, walled against the wind, walled as though for company. Each hamlet has its own, but some have been set down seemingly at random, in the middle of nowhere. The prettiest I saw was above a mere on the road to Esha Ness. At its center was a big tombstone set upright in front of a

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grassy hump with walls of rough rock, like a primitive family vault. A pair of gulls sat on top of the stone, peering around in a lordly, irritable way, as if they were the owners. Below them were carved two coats of arms and a great deal of small writing, most of it obliterated by the weather but ending sonorously "beloved in life, lamented in this death." Below that were an indecipherable Latin tag and a row of eighteenth-century hieroglyphs: crossed bones, a coffin, an hourglass. A blue-and-white bus had been abandoned beside the mere, tires gone, windows smashed, door rusted open. Near it, several shaggy Shetland ponies were drinking at the water's edge. They watched me uneasily, ready to take off, and one of them pawed fractiously at the water. Beyond the mere was a single farmhouse on a headland, and beyond that a wide bay, with its folded coastline diminishing into the distance. If there had ever been a village in the area, it had vanished without a trace.

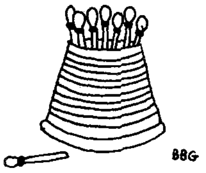
Although the Shetland landscape is as smooth, undulating, and featureless as a gently rolling sea, the islands are, geologically, the stump of a mountain range that was eroded millions of years ago. In outline on the map, they have the same wild, jagged shape as the Alps seen from the air: bays and inlets by the hundred and of every shape and size; three thousand miles of coastline for five hundred and fifty square miles of land area. Because of this, and because of the sparse population, the roads on Shetland are unlike any other roads I have driven: they simply end. Even the main A-970, which begins at Sumburgh, on the southern tip, and runs north the whole length of the mainland, just fades away at its northern end. The name on the map where the red line ends is Isbister, but Isbister was three farmhouses, a walled graveyard, and a field of yellow irises. Beyond the farmyard, the road continued unsurfaced, but there was a gate across it, and nailed to the gate was a notice that said, "Private Road. No Dogs. No Entry." I parked the car on the grass and trudged up the dusty private track, then struck off across the moor to an ordnance-survey trig point at the top of Lanchestoo Hill. To the east, across Yell Sound, was the island of Yell, its low cliffs yellowy brown, the land beyond them flat and blank. Nobody—not even the man from the Shetland Tourist Organization—can think of much to say in Yell's favor except that it produces quantities of excellent peat. A big tanker was making its way slowly north from the Sullom Voe terminal toward the open sea. The strip of unsurfaced road ran on northward across the rolling moors to where the mainland ends at a lighthouse, a single white tooth with a cluster of rocky little islets beyond it: Gruney, the Club, Fladda, Turla, Ramna Stacks, Outer Stack. When I looked back south, I could see a scattering of houses on the edge of Burra Voe, and the ribbon of A-970 winding off into the blue hills. But apart from the tanker there was no sign at all of Europe's largest industrial development.

Even when I finally drove to Sullom Voe, there was no trace of the terminal until the last moment, when I turned a corner of the wide new road and saw, rising out of nowhere, a lone gas flare blazing into the sunlight above a low hill. Another corner, and the road emerged into the inner bay, Garths Voe, and there, on Sella Ness, the headland that forms the Voe's southern edge, were the Port Authority's modest administration buildings, an airstrip, and a jetty where two muscular tugs were tied up. Across the bay was the terminal itself, a thousand acres of high technology, miles of pipes and roads, rows of storage tanks and buildings. Yet it hardly intruded on the gaunt landscape. Apart from the power station, the buildings were single-story, and even the power station—the largest building in Shetland before the new sports complex at Lerwick was completed—was painted green, like many of the storage tanks, to blend into the moorland behind it. The whole vast enterprise seemed to have melted into the landscape. It was in place, it worked, yet it scarcely existed. Even Ian Clark could not have imagined that the view would be so scrupulously protected.

North Sea oil arrives at Sullom Voe by two pipelines—one from Brent, the other from Chevron's Ninian field. Both are about a hundred miles long, both cost more than a million pounds a mile. The oil comes ashore as "spiked," or "live," crude—with the gases dissolved in it. The gas is stripped out and separated into five components. The two lightest fractions, ethane and methane, are used to drive the terminal's power station. (It can produce a hundred and twenty-five megawatts—almost twice that of the power station at Lerwick, which provides electricity for the whole archipelago.) The heavier gases, butane and propane, are cooled until they become liquid and then are shipped out in refrigerated tankers as liquefied-petroleum gas, and the fifth, pentane, is spiked back into the crude for processing later. This "dead" crude is then pumped into storage tanks, where it waits to be shipped by tanker to the world's refineries. Sullom Voe, then, is a holding area—a buffer between the North Sea oil fields and the refineries in the south. It has sixteen crude-oil storage tanks, each capable of holding six hundred thousand barrels, and these enable the offshore fields to go on producing even when the tankers are immobilized by storms.

Yet all this intense activity seems to occur without human intervention, as if by magic. The terminal was as unpeopled as the Shetland landscape, although the parking lot was full and the reception hall of the main office building made me feel I had been transported abruptly back to London: soft carpets and soft lighting, telephones ringing petulantly in the background, secretaries coming and going. But outside, in the terminal itself, there was no one at all, apart from two security guards on the main gates. For an hour, I was driven around by Peter Guy, the former R.A.F. officer who now lives on Yell, and we might as well have been in a lunar module guided by ghostly presences back on earth. Guy was cheerful and informal—the R.A.F. is the least buttoned-up of the British services—and full of facts. We went first to the terminal's jetties, stopping opposite a narrow gangway at the seaward end of four long arms reaching out into the bay—one for the refrigerated tankers that take the liquefied-petroleum gas, the three others for oil tankers. That day, only one giant tanker was moored there, connected to the shore by the umbilical of a great loading arm. There was no one on its deck and no one on the jetty, but the oil, Guy assured me, was being pumped in at full blast—a maximum of something over twenty thousand tons an hour.

We drove back, alongside a line of huge silver pipes, into the terminal, where Guy ticked off the landmarks as we passed: the fire station, the power station, the debutanizer, the depropanizer, the deethanizer, the electrical-distribution substation, the process-control room, the gas-compressor house, the separator drums, dehydrators, heat exchangers, and the elaborate machinery in which the crude oil is stabilized. A thousand acres of tanks and cylinders and twisting pipes, steel ladders and girders, three and a half million metres of electric cable, low, windowless buildings, pylons, and steel towers painted silver—and still we saw no one.



It had been different, Guy told me, when he first arrived, at the time the terminal was being built. At the peak of the construction period, there were seven thousand two hundred people on the payroll, and, even with more than a quarter of them alternated on leave, between four and five thousand were always working on the site, in a jungle of equipment, and with twenty canteens to keep them fed. Two prefabricated villages were put up to house this invasion, and when they proved inadequate the oil companies chartered two cruise ships, which they moored in Garths Voe. "My first day here, I got lost in the chaos and nearly drove off the end of the jetty," Guy said. "And if I had, no one would have ever known. Weeks later, perhaps, somebody would have said, 'I wonder what happened to that chap Guy. Only stayed a day. Very odd.' "

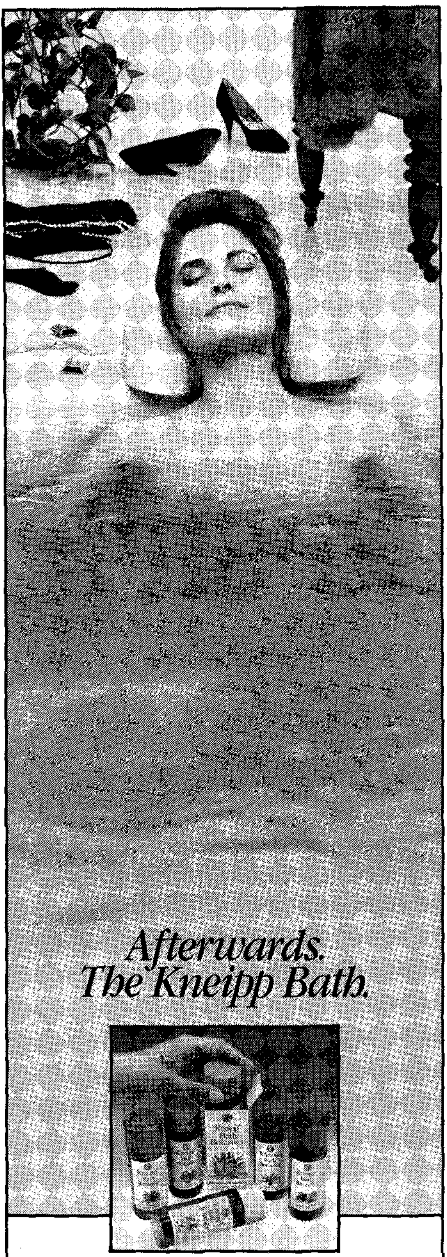
We drove up a hill at the back of the terminal and parked near three steel fingers from which excess gas is flared off in emergencies. From above, the great maze of pipes and machinery looked like the intestines of a metal giant laid out for an anatomy class. Here and there, puffs of steam rose hissing into the air, and off to our right the main gas flare blazed in the sunlight with a sound like urgent, muffled drums. A helicopter carrying core samples from an offshore platform to the terminal's laboratories arced in from the north and dropped out of sight onto the landing strip at Scatsta. A single truck lumbered along a road on the far side of the terminal. Nothing else moved in the silence. Yet the whole vast plant was working flat out, controlled by technicians hidden away in square, low computer centers. Brian Lappin, of Esso, had said that "oil is a capital-intensive industry that prides itself on its efficient use of manpower," and now I understood what he meant. The terminal and its maintenance contractors have a total of six hundred and fifty employees on their books for day and night shifts, but not one of them was visible.

When I opened the car door to stretch my legs and look around, Guy said uneasily, "I wouldn't do that if I were you. They're watching us on video in the control room at this moment." I closed the door again quickly. Sure enough, on the legs of a pylon overlooking the road was a video camera, which moved when we moved.

As we drove back toward reception, Guy began to talk about his family. His wife, he said, taught music in the local schools. They had a good life up here, peaceful and satisfying. Then he said, "The Shetlanders believe in fairies, you know. They tell stories of trows—their version of trolls—who are sleeping in the hills, biding their time. We don't take it seriously, of course, not in this day and age. But you live here for a bit and it begins to make sense." It made sense, too, in the silent emptiness of the terminal. With all that modern magic as the reality of his everyday life, he would need to believe in something.

There did not even seem to be much difference between the vast, unpeopled terminal shut away in Sullom Voe and the trows hidden in the hills. Although the terminal has transformed the economy of the islands, it has altered their emptiness very little. It is as if the Shetlands had their own magic, which swallows up people as it has swallowed up trees, leaving a green and temperate desert of grass and peat and rock, with the sea waiting wherever you turn. In the long summer days—at 11 P.M. it was still light enough to read without a lamp—the place was as serene as the Isles of the Blest. But in winter the Shetlands must be like the rock in Eliot's "The Dry Salvages," which "in the sombre season, Or the sudden fury, is what it always was": a flattened mountain range rising out of the bitter northern sea.

Despite that, the islands cast a spell that is hard to break. "When I left Shetland, I vowed deliberately that I would return only on business," Ian Clark said. "I was so in love with the place and the community that I reckoned that if I didn't make a clean break I would never be able to settle anywhere else." Clark had left because his success in dealing with the oil companies brought him offers he



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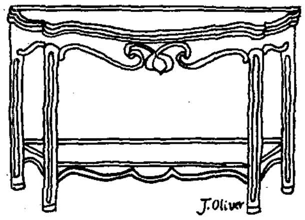
couldn't refuse. But there seemed to be many people who had originally come to Shetland solely because there was well-paid work to be had, and were then taken over by the spirit of the place and could no longer get away. One morning, on the road between Hillswick and Brae, I picked up a couple of hitchhikers—a lean, dark man in his middle thirties and a much younger woman, pretty but sulky. The man said he was from Southampton, although he spoke with a Yorkshire accent. He had come to Shetland eight years earlier to work as a joiner on the Sullom Voe construction site but had stayed on when the terminal was completed, and now lived in one of a cluster of run-down trailers not far from the St. Magnus Bay Hotel. It was three years, he said, since he had left the islands: "I dunno. I just can't seem to get away." He brooded for a while in silence. In the rearview mirror, I could see his girlfriend watching us distrustfully. Then he brightened slightly and said, "Of course, there's plenty of work, and the money's good." I wanted to ask why, then, after eight years, he was carless and living in a lopsided trailer. Perhaps it had something to do with the sullen girl in the back seat, who seemed to be younger than he by at least ten years; perhaps there was a wife somewhere, and alimony payments. I glanced again into the rearview mirror: the girlfriend's eyes did not waver, and her expression did not change.



"What's the public transport like?" I asked.

"Public transport!" he repeated scornfully. "Two buses a week to Lerwick. No, three now. That's your public transport." He lapsed once again into silence.

When I dropped them off at Brae, the girl muttered "Thanks." And that was all she said.

AT the hotel, they had told me that if I wanted to see what Shetland had been like before the oil came I should go to the western part of the mainland, where the great, ragged pommel of the dagger juts out into the Atlantic. I drove south on A-970 to a hamlet called Voe, then took a meandering B road south and west across rolling countryside that was even bigger, emptier, and more beautiful than the empty landscapes I had already seen. For mile after mile, the road wound up and down over bald moorland dotted with boulders, pitted with little lakes. Occasionally, the road dipped to an inlet where a few houses, a jetty, and a couple of boats at anchor had a name on the map: Gonfirth, Souther Ho, East Burrafirth, Aith. Then the road was off again into the mild, empty hills, where larks rose and fell, singing their hearts out, and sheep grazed peacefully. There are said to be three hundred thousand sheep on Shetland, but the crofters make do with flocks of fifty or sixty and have a name for each animal. Near Bixter, the road flattened and straightened for a few miles west, then took off again into rolling country, where every hollow seemed to hold a little tarn, its glinting surface ruffled by the wind, as if the sea had not yet fully receded. But without trees, without foreground, the landscape was vague, endless, hard to focus on.

Then, suddenly, the foreground appeared without warning, in the shape of a battered old Datsun that arrived at the blind brow of a gentle hill at the same moment I reached it from the opposite direction. The road was single-track, like most of the minor roads on Shetland, and the Datsun was squarely in the middle of it. I swerved onto the grass verge and came to rest with my car heeled over like a racing yacht, its near-side wheels firmly in a ditch. The Datsun skidded to a halt. Its coachwork was dented and patched with primer; there was a Conservative Party election sticker on its rear window. The driver got out unsteadily. He wore old jeans and no shirt. His plump body was pale and hairless, his mop of curls unkempt. I could smell the booze on his breath from two yards off. Yet the odd thing was that neither of us said a word. We simply stared at each other glumly while the larks sang overhead. Years of city driving have conditioned me to shout first, then compromise grudgingly, but now, for the first time, there seemed to be no point in the charade that drivers perform in order to protect their no-claims bonuses. He's drunk, I thought, and shouting won't get me anywhere; anyway, I'm going to need him to get my car back on the road. But more important was the place itself: whatever happened to two figures in all that emptiness could not amount to much. So we looked at each other, more embarrassed than angry, and then we looked around. From where we stood, the road was visible for miles in both directions. Nothing moved on it. We were going to have to pull the car out of the ditch by ourselves. The shirtless man seemed unperturbed. On the evidence of the dents in his car, he had been here before.

It was like a movie with no soundtrack. Silently, we went over to my car, got down in the ditch and began to heave. Although his body looked flabby and unaired, he was very strong. The muscles knotted on his pale arms, his eyes bulged, his face ran with alcoholic sweat. We strained for ten minutes—first at one end, then at the other—and succeeded in manhandling my rented Ford six inches up the ditch. Then the crankcase wedged into the peaty turf and would not budge. "Now what?" I asked. The man shrugged, walked back to his car, and began to fiddle with a CB radio on the dashboard. His voice was muttering and low, hard to catch. A gull swooped down onto the road and stood watching us disapprovingly. "Nae luck," the pale man said, and shook his head. We went back to the ditch and heaved again, but with less conviction. As I was wondering whether I would ever see him again if he drove off for help, the gull rose disdainfully and another car came slowly over the rise. The driver was elderly but heavily built, with fine white hair and a large belly. Without saying a word, he climbed down into the ditch with us and began to heave. This time, we got the rear wheels most of the way onto the verge, but still the crankcase would not shift. The elderly man stared at it, head cocked to one side, then took a length of rope from the trunk of his car and pointed briskly at the Datsun. "Back her up," he said. "We'll tie 'em axle to axle." Within minutes, my car was back on the road. When I tried to thank the old man, he cut me off with "Nae trouble." He and the Datsun driver muttered together in dialect for a moment, then drove away in convoy.

I began to understand what Ian Clark and the others had meant about the closeness of the Shetland community, and about how behavior was affected by the exposure and loneliness of the place. In the emergency, my London conditioning had vanished. All that mattered was to get the car back onto the road; everything else was a waste of time and a waste of energy—a mere impertinence in that great, empty landscape.

I followed the road to Sandness, then on to Melby, where it ended. Sandness was a scattering of houses and a sharp bend in the road. At the bend was an ancient gasoline pump and a shop with a weather-beaten sign over the door: "Robert Jamieson & Co. Licensed to Sell Tobacco." At the corners of the sign, in old-fashioned script, were the words "Grocers," "Hirers," "Drapers," "Hosiers." The shop was closed.

Melby was even smaller: two squat stone houses, a shed, and a jetty. Four freshly painted clinker-built rowboats were pulled up on the shingle—one white, one yellow, one gray, one a brilliant mauve. On the slipway next to the jetty was a rubber boat with a big outboard motor; beside it, a group of divers in black wetsuits were sorting their gear. (The waters off Shetland are littered with wrecks, and some of the divers I met later told me they came here in their time off to try their hand at treasure hunting.) Just offshore was an islet called the Holm of Melby, square and flat and featureless. Beyond that, to the north, lay the ragged coastline of Papa Stour, big and low on the horizon. But westward, toward the misty sun, there was only the shifting gray Atlantic, and Greenland the first landfall. Apart from the divers, with their rubber boat and flippers and bottled air, nothing seemed to have changed at Melby for a hundred years. And apart from the road and the shed and the two stone cottages the place was the same as it must have been when the first Norsemen arrived, in the eighth century—beautiful, untouched, silent, stern. Melby seemed closer to Greenland than to the terminal at Sullom Voe, and when I turned the car around and headed east, toward the evening, I felt I was going home, back to the twentieth century.

AT the beginning of April, 1977, Paul (Red) Adair, the legendary Texas trouble-shooter for the oil industry, speaking on the BBC, issued a solemn warning about the North Sea oil fields:

> Whatever precautions are taken, there'll be a disaster in the North Sea, sooner or later. There are no proper facilities for coping with it. The thing is time, to get trained personnel there. By then the well may have caught fire—then it gets larger and larger, like a chain reaction, from this well, to the next well, to the next well. The more wells you have, on any platform, the more difficult it gets, because the heat will go to the next tree. You get flames, leaks, and it just goes on and on. The hardware to deal with a disaster? At the moment, for a real blowout, you don't have anything. Just a few little vessels, a thing that will squirt water. BP's Forties *Kiwi* is totally inadequate. I've been to England a number of times, and talked to them on the North Sea about the equipment they would need. . . . Everything's sitting out there, wide open, with nothing to protect it.

Less than three weeks later, on April 22nd, Adair's predictions were fulfilled in the direst way when Well 14 on Ekofisk Bravo, in the Norwegian sector, blew out. The disaster occurred in the space of five minutes, between the removal of the Christmas tree and the positioning of the blowout preventer. The preventer, a huge contraption weighing seven thousand pounds, was in fact in place, but it had been put in upside down. While the operators tried to turn it right side up, the oil came gushing out of the wellhead onto the platform. It went on gushing for eight days, at the rate of three thousand tons a day, until there was an oil slick covering nine hundred square miles of the North Sea. If the platform had caught fire, it might have burned for months. But Red Adair himself and two of his lieutenants—Asgar (Boots) Hansen and Richard Hatteberg—finally recapped the well and brought the catastrophe under control with typical Texas aplomb. (When Hansen arrived at Stavanger, Norway, on his way to Ekofisk Bravo, he was asked if it would take thirty-five days to control the blowout. He answered, "Thirty-five days? I only work thirty-five days a year.") The oil slick was dispersed by luck—broken up by the wind and waves after four Vikoma skimmers, specially developed to collect floating oil, had failed to do their job.

Adair had not only predicted the disaster but also submitted plans for a specialized firefighting vessel, which the oil companies had rejected on the ground of expense. They changed their minds after the catastrophe, and since then a series of these vessels has appeared in the North Sea, the latest of them being the M.S.V. Stadive. When I first went offshore, Stadive was about to begin its first voyage from the beach up the pipeline to Brent. It had been built in Finland, and launched into the Gulf of Bothnia the previous November. The journey from Finland to Aberdeen had taken a week, with Stadive crawling across

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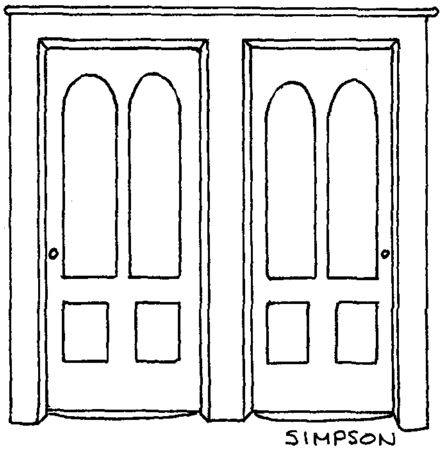
the North Sea in the dead of winter. But by the time I returned to Brent, in July, it was hard at work in the field.

Like Treasure Finder, M.S.V. Stadive is a self-propelled, twin-hulled semisubmersible, a gigantic coffee table, three stories high, supported by six columns and resting on two pontoons the size of submarines. "M.S.V." stands for "multifunctional service vessel," and one of its functions is that of a Red Adair-style mobile firefighting-and-rescue unit. It carries a "well kill" package and an elaborate access tower with a movable staircase for transferring men and gear to and from a stricken installation. It also has sixteen fire monitors, or nozzles, of different sizes strategically placed around its sides. The monitors look like cannons painted red and fitted with heavy silver collars near their muzzles, but their bases are twisted like coiled snakes in order to distribute the battering force of the water. Among them, they can deliver nine thousand two hundred cubic metres of water an hour, projecting it two hundred metres horizontally with a force that can smash through the wall of a module.

Like so many North Sea statistics, these figures are overwhelming and meaningless. But as I discovered when I stood on the deck and watched a test of Stadive's firefighting capacity, the figures give no hint of the power and strange beauty of the monitors in action. A deep thunder starts up, as though somewhere far below your feet an underwater volcano had begun to erupt. The thunder grows louder, deeper, more intense, and the whole vessel vibrates like a creature in *tremor mortis*. Then it jerks abruptly backward, as if punched, and suddenly grows wings: great ostrich feathers of water arcing far up into the sky, spreading out into a fan, and gracefully falling. But because this is water that the cannons are firing, not shells, everything seems to happen in slow motion. After the backward shudder of the vessel, you can actually see the silvery-white projectiles race skyward before the great wings of water unfold. It is at last a process commensurate with the forces of nature that the oil companies explore and harness with their technology. In modern oil production, there are no more gushers, no more moments when it looks as if, in the words of an early oilman named Dusty Woods, quoted by Samuel W. Tait in "The Wildcatters," "the earth had cut an artery." The only indication of the scale of the operation is in those endless lists of figures with so many digits that they seem unrelated to ordinary life. But the sea cuts an artery when Stadive fires its monitors.

Firefighting is a function that Shell hopes Stadive will not often have to perform. In the meantime, it earns its keep as a diving vessel, moving around the field to wherever underwater maintenance and repair are needed. Firefighting and diving have one common requirement: whatever the weather is doing, the vessel must be able to stay where it is put. To achieve this, Stadive has a dynamic-positioning system, or D.P. system, made up of nine propulsion thrusters—six on the port pontoon, three on the starboard. As marine engines go, the thrusters are relatively small, but they are very powerful: each of them puts out twenty-four hundred brake horsepower to drive variable-pitch propellers that, between them, can be turned through every angle in the horizontal plane. The coördinates of the vessel's required position are fed into a computer, which operates the thrusters continually, in minute bursts, to counteract the effects of the sea. Stadive can come up to within a few yards of an installation and stay there safely in everything except the very worst weather, and thus its divers are able to work virtually all the year round. They have even kept going in a Force 10 gale—a feat they are proud of but would prefer not to repeat regularly.

"It couldn't be done without a computer," said Alec MacLeod, Stadive's captain. (His official title is staff master.) "Two computer systems, in fact —one monitoring the D.P., the other monitoring the first." MacLeod is a stocky, affable man with green-blue eyes and strong teeth. "The last thing you'd want to do is take over manually," he said. "There is no possible way a man could keep the vessel in position accurately enough." We were on the navigation bridge, which is also the firefighting-control center. The enclosed base of one of Stadive's three ponderous cranes filled the middle of the room; the outer walls were lined with shining banks of controls—inclined white panels covered with switches, buttons, knobs, dials, and colored lights. Through the forward window, Cormorant A loomed out of the busy water a couple of hundred yards off, a bright-orange standby boat swinging close to it. The sky was a fragile blue. On such a beautiful summer's day, it was hard to concentrate on all that technology, although without the technology there would have been nobody in this remote place to admire the view. "Don't let the sunshine fool you," MacLeod said cheerfully. "It's blowing a Force Four out there."



Like the D.P. computers, Stadive's control systems are duplicated elsewhere on board. On the port side of the deck below the navigation bridge is the D.P. room—more formidable banks of switches and dials and lights, and one man staring gloomily out the windows at an empty sea. Opening off that is the far larger operations-control center, windowless and even more jammed with elaborate, glimmering switchboards. Technicians moved purposefully about, lights flashed, the air hummed quietly. MacLeod showed me an instrument that looked like an outsize, intricately calibrated spirit level with three big dials. The needles on the dials were all slightly off center, indicating that Stadive was listing a degree or two. He pressed three buttons, which immediately lit up. The needles on the three dials began to swing—very, very slowly—back to their center point. In a few minutes, MacLeod had shifted twenty tons of ballast in the pontoons, and the vessel was once again riding dead level. The lights on the panel went out.

We took an elevator down one of the six columns that support the superstructure, dropped smoothly below the waterline into one of the pontoons, and came out into a circular chamber so filled with the roar of engines that the air seemed almost solid. Each of the thruster engines was about five feet across and hooded; under the metal hood, the parts whirred so fast that they seemed to stand still. On the side of each thruster was a device like the hand control of an old-fashioned elevator—a semicircular steel plate from which protruded a little lever with a black knob on its top. The levers moved continually as the computers changed the pitch of the propeller blades in the water below. The chamber was as immaculate as an operating theatre and was permeated by the sharp, rousing smell of clean machine oil.

For most of the time, the complex technology and the banks of computers monitoring other computers are there to serve just one purpose and two or three people. Suspended from a moonpool at Stadive's center, far down in the black silence of the seabed, was a manned diving bell; attached to that by an umbilical, two divers were working on the pipeline from Brent to Sullom Voe, all their movements monitored on instruments and video screens in the small, crowded diving-control room, immediately behind the operations-control center.

Maintenance of one kind or another is a full-time job in the North Sea. Trawl boards dragging from fishing boats damage the concrete casing of the pipeline, or the seabed shifts in the currents, leaving unsupported spans of pipe. And the installations themselves, constantly deteriorating in the wind and the rain and the salt water, must be inspected at least once a year. To carry out the inspections, the seaweed, barnacles, and rust must be blasted off with high-pressure hoses until the welds are cleaned to what is called "bright metal;" then they can be tested with ultrasonic and magnetic particle-inspection tools. It sounds like the North Sea mixture as before—dazzling high tech plus a great deal of elbow grease—until you remember that most of this work has to be carried out far below the stormy surface of the sea.

The maximum depth at which divers are legally permitted to work while breathing ordinary air pumped from the surface is fifty metres. Because air is close to eighty per cent nitrogen, and nitrogen under pressure, like alcohol, is a depressant, nitrogen narcosis sets in below fifty metres, and often sooner. The mind wanders, reactions slow, vision blurs, simple jobs become intolerably difficult, simple jokes provoke hysterical laughter. Air diving has a further disadvantage: as the diver returns to the surface, decompression is difficult and slow, the danger of the bends is always present. When a diver goes under pressure, the gas that is pumped into his lungs then finds its way into his bloodstream. This happens quickly, but the reverse process—"coming up for air"—by which the lungs filter the gas out of the bloodstream, is much slower. When the pressure is reduced too rapidly, bubbles of gas form in the bloodstream, get trapped in the joints, and cut off the flow of blood. "Agonizing," a diver told me. "It feels like sharp needles in your ankles, knees, and elbows, and especially in your back." The only way to avoid the bends is by extremely slow and careful decompression, and this makes air diving a costly process. "A man would go in, make his dive, and maybe work on the bottom for an hour," said John Roberts, the diving officer for B.P., whom I talked to in Aberdeen. "Then it would take days to decompress him." Roberts is a big man with a slightly drooping face and a wry, self-knocking manner; he looks like a sturdy British version of Walter Matthau. He learned his skills in the Navy and was diving until he was forty-six—when he was the oldest diver in the North Sea. He stopped only because he injured his leg in a road accident. He now walks with a slight limp. He went on, "In the old days—in diving terms, that means ten years ago or less—we used what is called standard gear: a copper helmet, big lead boots, big lead weights front and back, and as many clothes as you could get on under your canvas suit. We used to go down and crawl around on the bottom on our hands and knees most of the time. Then the oil companies came along. They wanted people to stay down for longer periods, and they wanted greater depth. So a great deal of money was suddenly poured into the business."

Out of that investment came hundreds of new developments and discoveries, until diving depths that had once set records and cost lives came to be considered everyday working levels. One of the most significant discoveries was that when divers worked at depth for extended periods, until their blood became literally saturated with inert gas, their decompression time was not significantly longer than it was when they worked for much shorter spells. It was therefore logical as well as economical to create an environment in which divers could live at the atmospheric pressure at which they were working, and decompress only when they were ready to return to the beach. As always in the oil industry, the step

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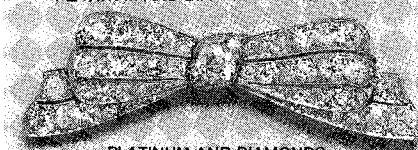

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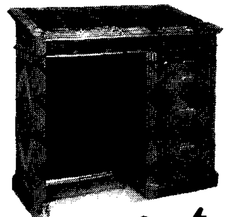

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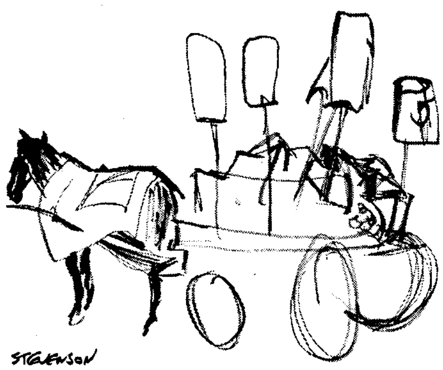
from economic logic to practice was short and decisive. Deep divers on Stadive now spend almost four weeks in saturation, living in specially pressurized habitats on the lower deck and moving directly from them to similarly pressurized diving bells that take them down to the seabed. They work for twenty-one days, usually in eight-hour shifts, without ever breathing ordinary air, and then decompress for three or four days. At the end of that time, they spend four well-earned weeks back on the beach.

The problem of nitrogen narcosis, *la folie des profondeurs*, has been solved by using a mixture of helium and oxygen instead of air. Helium is an inert gas that does not misbehave under pressure and is easily absorbed into the bloodstream and body tissues. But this makes it hard to get out, and the process of decompression is comparatively slow. It also has the great disadvantage of high thermal conductivity, taking heat away from the body six times as fast as ordinary air. Diving suits have been redesigned accordingly. Gone are the hammered-copper helmet, the lead boots, and the canvas suit in which John Roberts learned to dive in the Navy. In their place is a stylish double-skinned outfit in black and red that looks like an overweight ski suit. Threaded all through it, and extending into the gloves and feet, is a dense network of pipes, like an anatomical map of the blood system, and through these pipes hot water circulates. The water is, in fact, very hot; it reaches the diver at 50 to 60 degrees centigrade—around 130 degrees Fahrenheit—although, because of the helium, it feels to him only pleasantly warm. It is pumped through the umbilical that connects him to the diving bell, and it comes out through tiny perforations in the pipes, flushing the layer between the inner and the outer skin of the suit, and exits through a hose at the wrist. Under the suit, the diver wears only a lightweight thermal outfit—called a woolly bear—to protect his skin from abrasion. His helmet is streamlined plastic; he wears flippers on his feet.

The umbilical is a thick, rubber-covered rope made up of five strands: the hot-water line (a hollow tube of reinforced rubber); a strain member, or wire strand, which keeps the rope from breaking; a gas line (of reinforced rubber), which pumps oxy-helium into the diver's helmet; a pneumohose (a hose of reinforced rubber), which measures depth; and a communications line (of electrical cable), connecting the diver's microphone with the diving-control room on the surface. But it is also an umbilical in the true sense of the word: without the hot water, the diver would be dead in minutes. "It's the cold that would kill them, not the pressure," Roberts had said. "Hypothermia." Strapped to the diver's back is an emergency gas supply and gas heater, called the bailout, that he switches on if the gas supply fails or the umbilical springs a leak. "We've got about six minutes of air in the bailout," a diver said. "This is reduced a bit because of the size of the helmet, but it's enough to get back to the bell. If something goes wrong, the adrenaline starts pumping, and you'll get back, believe me, in six minutes. Or a lot less. You'll breathe anything down there to get back."

What it must feel like to be under five hundred feet of water, alone in all that darkness, is not something an outsider can easily comprehend. But what it looks like is plainly on view on video screens, surrounded by dials and switches, in the diving-control room. In comparison with the constant coming and going in the diving-control room, the chat and the orders, the amplified rasp of the diver's breathing and his squawking voice over the intercom—he sounds like Donald Duck, another effect of helium—life on the seabed seems curiously calm and slow. On one video screen is a working diver, and on another is the bellman, although at first glance all that can be seen of him is a pair of hands holding a fat paperback and surrounded by what looks like a mass of seaweed outlined against the sun. This eventually resolves itself into the bellman's legs, a complicated tangle of pipes and gear, and the open bottom of the bell with the lights reflecting off the water.

The diver, when I first saw him, had just finished sandbagging an unsupported span of pipeline and was trying to fix in place a job-identification board, which he would then photograph for the record. Each time he propped the little board on top of the pipe, an underwater current toppled it off again. After three tries, he managed to get the board steady, then backed away and pointed his bulky camera. A fish swam into view, flicked its tail, and disappeared into the murk. The board toppled over. "Faaa . . ." said the diver.



"Don't let it getcher down," said the D.C.R. supervisor, who wore gold chains around his neck and one gold earring. His hair was curly and carefully styled, and he had a Sitwellian parrot's nose and a Liverpool accent as thick as Ringo Starr's. He adjusted a dial while he talked, and watched the figures at the bottom of the diver's screen. There were two lines of them, and two of those on the top were constantly changing: "DEPTH 0143.3 [.4, .3, .4]; PITCH—19 [ranging from −25 to +5]; HEAD 000 [steady]." On the bottom line were the date, the time, and the job number: "07-05-83; 09:08.56; INC NO 883."

The diver propped the board up again and backed off with his camera. The control room was silent except for the steady, distorted rasp of his breath over the loudspeaker: "Huuuaaa . . . huuuaaa." Then the sound of the breathing suddenly stopped. The supervisor grabbed the microphone and made frantic signs to an assistant. At the same moment, the breathing started again.

"Don't *do* that to me!" the supervisor shouted.

"Do whaaa . . . ?"

"He must have been holding his breath to take the shot," said the assistant.

The diver collected the board and began to swim slowly forward up the pipeline, his trailing umbilical stirring up clouds of silt. A large spider crab was plastered against the base of the pipeline. "I fancy that for my dinner," said the supervisor.

"They're right bastards to catch," said his assistant. "You get 'em behind the head and they still nip you."

The supervisor shook his head wearily. "It's a gang of bloody cowards I've got here," he said.

The diver clambered up onto the top of the pipeline and balanced there, a little unsteadily, profiled against the lights from the bell in the distance, a blue-black cutout with a halo of brilliance, as strange and lonely and vividly lit as a dream. The busy, enclosed diving-control room, with its dials and switches and obscure electronics, seemed a curious setting for beauty; and for a few moments the whole enterprise changed focus. The men and machinery on the surface, the oil steadily pumping from miles down under the sea on its complex way to the highway service stations seemed beside the point. The point was this one man going imperturbably about his business with four hundred and seventy feet of black water above him. Then he stepped back down from the pipe and disappeared in a cloud of silt.

We could watch him from Stadive, despite the engulfing darkness, because he is followed everywhere by a remotely operated vehicle, or R.O.V.—sometimes called an eyeball, more generally known as Snoopy. The R.O.V. is an orange plastic ball, a couple of feet in diameter, with lights and a television camera on one side, a propeller on the other. It has an umbilical that connects it to an operator on the surface, who jiggles a little joystick to move it in any direction he wants. R.O.V.s are used instead of divers for the preliminary, routine inspection of underwater structures—moving, pausing, photographing as the experts above require. "An R.O.V. saves a lot of money," Roberts had said. "You don't have to decompress it for days on end, it never goes sick, it never asks for a pay rise." But the instrument's most important function is to monitor the diver, lighting up the place where he works and keeping an eye on his well-being. When the R.O.V. was first introduced, the divers resented it, feeling they were being spied on. "If something goes wrong—say, you drop a tool—everyone can see. That's why they called it Snoopy," said a young diver named David Hamm. But, with use, the name has become affectionate, and the divers now think of the R.O.V. more as Charlie Brown's dog than as Big Brother. "It's cold and dark and lonely down there," Hamm said. "Snoopy's like a pet. You take it with you wherever you go. It's company, it's got lights, you can swim for it. Even though you know it can't help, it's still a comfort. It means there is someone up there keeping an eye on you. It makes you feel safe."

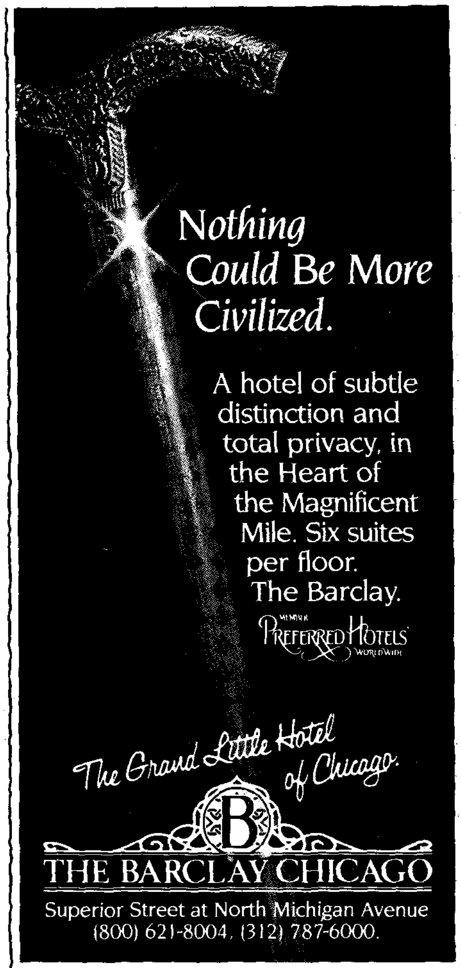
Hamm was twenty-three years old, the youngest man I met offshore—short and trim, with close-cropped hair, a rectangular face, and large, studious spectacles. Despite his youth, he had five years' experience in the North Sea. He began diving seriously as a sport when he was fourteen; at eighteen, he took a four-month training course in air diving at a school in Los Angeles and later went to Fort William, in the Scottish Highlands, for six weeks of bell training, before going offshore. "The funny thing is, I couldn't swim properly until I was sixteen," he said. "I could do a couple of lengths—you have to, in order to qualify for the course—but even now I'm not much of a swimmer. Yet I could dive—swim with fins—since I was six. It still feels all wrong whenever I swim without fins."

When I asked John Roberts what really deep water did to the diver, his face assumed a particularly world-weary look, and all he said was "Not a lot. The deeper you go, the slower you move. That's all."

David Hamm, being many years closer to whatever it was that had first drawn him to this strange profession, was more forthcoming. "Commercial diving is quite different from what I'd imagined," he said. "I'd always wanted to go into saturation, and when I did my first deep dive the sensation was worth the investment. It's very eerie, like stepping onto the moon. I suppose that's what it is, really—an unknown world, but downward instead of up. I have to admit that when I started I found the transition from air diving to deep diving very . . . stressful."

"Stressful?"

Hamm blushed. "O.K., frightening. The water is pitch-black, and you get a tremendous feeling of agoraphobia. Claustrophobia doesn't worry me at all, but when you get out of the bell in midwater with all that water above you and below, and you can't even see the job—well, whatever they say, everyone has a fear of the swim. You go out of the bottom of the bell, climb up onto its top, and leap. That climb gains you only a couple of feet, but it *feels* more. And it's like leaping off into the void, into nothingness. That's when I think about the depth of the water, although some of the lads aren't bothered at all. O.K., you've got a tether, the umbilical. But it's black as midnight and kind of directionless. After you leave the bell, you're on your own, and it's a matter of pedal-power. With all the diving gear—your helmet, your waterlogged suit, your bailout cylinder, and the umbilical dragging after you—a long



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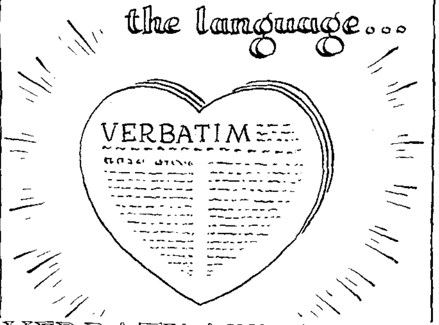

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swim becomes very strenuous. By a long swim, I mean more than twenty metres. In fact, the umbilicals are forty-four metres, although the new ones are sixty—and that's one hell of a long way. The other difference between deep diving and air diving is that down there everything is so huge. The legs of the concrete structures stand on concrete storage cells, and the domes of those cells are enormous—it's like swimming over the Pennines. It's the same with the steel structures; their latticework is gigantic and terribly confusing."

"Stressful" seemed a mild word for such activity. Yet when I asked him how long he would go on diving he shrugged and said, "Till I'm thirty, maybe." When you're twenty-three, perhaps, thirty seems as far away as eighty. "You see, you get so psyched up when you dive," he continued, "and it becomes such a big part of your life that I couldn't imagine cutting it off, just like that, and settling down to run a pub. Maybe I'll go into the management side of diving. Or maybe I'll just keep on diving."

We talked about diving while he took me on a tour of one of the saturation chambers, where the divers live when they are at work. Stadive has the largest commercial-diving spread in the world: two bells, a small submarine, a divers' escape lifeboat, and room for twenty-eight men in saturation—two six-man chambers, two eight-man chambers. Hamm took me first to a decompression chamber on the surface, where an air diver goes if he gets the bends. It was a small cylinder, about fifteen feet long and five feet in diameter, like a punishment cell, with enough room to lie down but not to stand up. Along one side was a gray metal bench with a telephone at one end of it and a bib—an oxygen line and mask—at the other. Opposite the bench, lashed back neatly against the wall, was a narrow bunk.

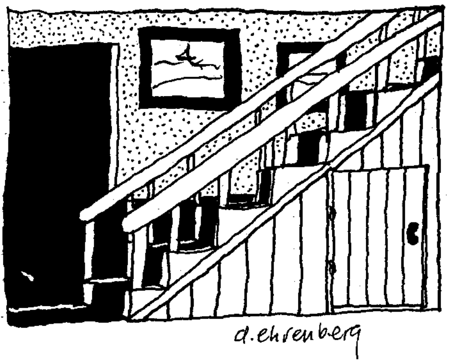
"It's just as well claustrophobia doesn't go with the job," I said.

"The way things are nowadays, the bends don't, either," Hamm said.

In comparison, the saturation chambers seemed spacious and comfortable. The working divers are brought up to the surface in the bell, and it locks onto a wet chamber. They take off their suits there, and then crawl through a hatch into a crowded area that passes for their bathroom: a washbasin, a shower, and a toilet. But in saturation nothing is simple—not even washing. There is a difference in pressure between the chambers and the outside, so no taps can be turned on until a phone call has been made to control, to be sure that the water is correctly pressurized. Next to the toilet, to keep the air sweet, aluminum cannisters contain fans that scrub the atmosphere of carbon dioxide; a filter of soda-sorb granules lies above the fans; above that is a second filter, of carbon granules, to absorb the smells. And, to cope with the humidity that builds up quickly in such an enclosed space, there is a kinergetic system that heats the air and then cools it, thus condensing the humidity and precipitating it into bilges, from which it can be pumped away. Yet, even with all these precautions, things go wrong. Hamm told me that he once did a spell in saturation when the bathroom was unheated. "A helium environment is the bitterest cold you can imagine," he said. "We did our best not to wash or use the loo the whole three weeks we were in sat. We weren't any too fetching when we came out."

The living quarters seem like the inside of a giant cannon: a long tubular chamber with four bunks, in pairs, on each side of the curved walls—two up, two down—and an oxygen bib above each. The colors of the walls and curtains are soothing blues and grays. The ventilators and the dividers between the bunks are aluminum. To protect against fire, the lamps are shielded, and there are no switches—the lighting is controlled from outside. There is a good deal of firefighting equipment, as well as water sprays in the pipes that run along the ceiling. Fire is the abiding fear, for in an oxyhelium atmosphere chemical sprays are no use. "The only alternative to water is ox blood," said Hamm. "But that's not as gruesome as it sounds. Under pressure, it becomes just another white foam. It's very effective, but it stinks something awful."

Smoking, of course, is forbidden. "But the odd thing is, even heavy smokers don't miss it when they're in sat," Hamm said. "Maybe it's because you're being filled full of helium, or maybe you make a physiological adjustment as you come through that hatch at the beginning of a stint. But, as you decompress, the shallower you get, the stronger the craving becomes. All it takes is for someone to say the word 'tobacco,' and immediately you want to smoke. And when the hatch opens again the first thing you do is light up. We all say we're going to give it up one day—but only when they nail the lid on the box."



Although Stadive's saturation chambers can accommodate twenty-eight men, the normal operating number is twelve: three three-man teams—two men in the water, one in the bell—working around the clock in eight-hour shifts, and one team decompressing. With just Hamm and me in it, the chamber seemed large enough. But with eight weary men?

"It's O.K. when you're in working mode," Hamm said. "After eight hours in the water, all that's left is exhaustion. Everything goes into slow motion. Having a shower is a major event—it takes ages. And sometimes you sleep for twelve straight hours. After a bell run, they give you an hour to clean up, then they feed you. The meals come in through an airlock on the side, and you're encouraged to eat as much as you like—particularly good, nourishing things—because you use up so much energy in the water. We keep tea bags, Nescafé, and condiments in here. If you wake up and want a cuppa while the others are still asleep, they send you in hot water and a big sticky bun." His eyes behind his studious glasses became as wistful as a schoolboy's dreaming of the tuckshop. "Those sticky buns are really delicious," he said.

Even so, I said, four weeks is a long haul.

Hamm shook his head. "When you're working, time moves really fast, perhaps because you're sleeping so much. Decompression is much worse, because there's nothing to do but sit and wait. You read a lot, or maybe you play cards. But then your companions' little mannerisms can begin to get on your nerves. Or a rattle somewhere that won't stop. Things like that. You have to learn to control yourself, or life would become intolerable. But, of course, you're getting psyched up to go home, so it's not so bad."

Hamm clambered agilely out of the chamber, and I struggled after him clumsily: head first, grab the top of the hatch, swing your legs through. Out to the noise of engines, a metallic voice over the intercom, a technician whistling as he adjusted an airlock on one of the empty chambers. Even the faintly oily air smelled good. And I had been in the chamber no more than half an hour. "I'll tell you something," Hamm said. "Climbing out of that hatch is the nicest sensation in the world."

Later, I asked another diver about living in saturation. Shane Beary is a Rhodesian who joined his country's Army, then learned to dive in the South African Navy. He has worked in the North Sea for seven years and commutes each month from Brent to Marbella, in southern Spain. ("That's not much more difficult or expensive than getting to some places in England," he said. "And in winter it's dead cheap and much nicer.") He is in his middle thirties—a big man with thick blond hair, a blond mustache, and an opulent Costa del Sol suntan, but tough under his sleek exterior, and with no illusions at all about the glamour of his profession. Neither does he underestimate its strengths. "We're a very tightly knit group," he said. "I've worked with nearly all these guys, so there's a kind of link between us, a closeness. Maybe there are some people I'd prefer not to be with in sat. It's a question of personalities. But you learn to control your likes and dislikes, and not let little things get on your nerves. A very high proportion of us are ex-military. This means we have greater self-discipline than average. We can give a knock and take a knock; we know how to live together under pressure."

But there are pressures and pressures, I said; back on the beach, none of us could tolerate being shut up in a confined space for four weeks, even with someone we loved—particularly with someone we loved.

"Of course not," he answered. "If you were told to stay in a room as long as you could, but you knew that all you had to do to get out was open the door, how long would you last? In diving, you know there is no way you can break or bend the rules, no way you can get out. It doesn't matter what happens back on the beach—your child could die, your whole family could be wiped out in an accident, and it would still take you three or four days to decompress. So you make an adjustment."

Beary might also have been describing the atmosphere on Stadive itself: good-natured, forbearing, preoccupied; a close group that has made an adjustment. The crew is smaller than that of most installations—there are berths for only a hundred and twenty-eight—and far more friendly. Its members greet you in the corridors and are helpful in a casual way. They keep it casual, because there is a continual turnover in faces as the specialists are choppered in and out to perform their arcane functions: computer men, radar men, electronics men. Occasionally, someone appeared in what looked, in the North Sea, like fancy dress—wearing a gray flannel business suit and carrying a black leather attaché case. And for a couple of days there were two Frenchmen on board, technicians from Comex, the Marseilles-based diving company; both wore stylish mustaches, and both sat for hours in the mess hall, doing sums on their pocket calculators and picking disdainfully at the lavish food.

Yet, despite all the coming and going, Stadive felt more like a ship than like an installation. And, indeed, this great, awkward, oblong structure was often mysteriously on the move. There was no sense of forward motion, but sometimes the tone of the dynamic-positioning thrusters changed, and became more purposeful, and up on deck a line dangling overboard trailed gently back at an angle, indicating movement. Each morning, a different platform appeared off our beam as Stadive made its slow way along the pipeline: North Cormorant, South Cormorant, Brent Bravo, with Treasure Finder low on the water alongside it, linked by the gangway—the widowmaker—like a baby elephant holding its mother's tail. And always off on the horizon was the vague shape of an installation swaddled in mist, with its plume of fire rising, seemingly detached, into the clear upper sky.

"Diving is simply a method of getting a chap to his work site," John Roberts had said. "And air diving is a much nastier way of getting to work than deep diving. Think about it: it's the middle of the night, it's snowing or raining, blowing a gale, and damn cold. But you've got to disregard all that and get on with your job. In those conditions, a four-hour shift in the water is a long, long haul. Believe me, there's nothing glamorous about it. O.K., I suppose it's dangerous. So

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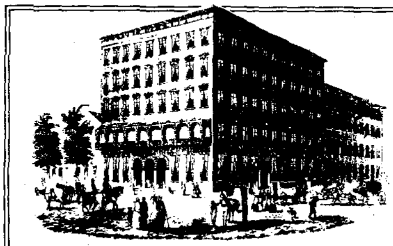
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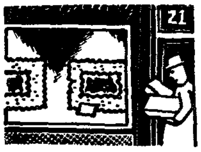
what? To me, that's like saying coal mining is glamorous. It's just uncomfortable and miserable and damn hard work. Deep diving, at least you're out of the weather."

If diving is just another way of getting to work, then the diving bell is an elevator that sits in the moonpool above the open water at the center of Stadive. The bell is a circular chamber, with a flat bottom and a domed top, inside a cursor—a skeleton of thick white tubes that come together at the top of the bell in a kind of open-weave cap. The bell's umbilical goes through the cursor, and the cursor is attached to tramlines that run to eighteen metres below the surface, enabling the bell to be lowered smoothly through the disturbance of the upper sea and drawn smoothly back up again into the belly of the vessel.



A diver named Billy Moran explained the procedure to me. Moran, who lives in Somerset, was straight-backed and short-haired and looked fit enough to go on diving for sixteen more years—until he reached fifty, retirement age. "We leave the main saturation chambers, climb into the bell, lock it off, and trolley ourselves into a position in the center of the moonpool, where they can lower the bell into the water," he said. "As they lower us, we read out the depth to them every ten metres. When we reach working level, we'll probably hear a hiss of water. That means the pressure outside is the same as the pressure inside, and the seal on the bottom door has automatically been released. There is a top and a bottom door in the base of the bell, with a gap between them. We equalize the pressure between the two, open the top door, lash it back, open the bottom door, and let it fall away. We've then got access straight through to the water. The next stage is to get the divers dressed and do our checks. We're already wearing our suits, so all the divers need to do is put on their helmets and bailouts and sort out the working gear they're going to need. Then they're ready to go out on the job."

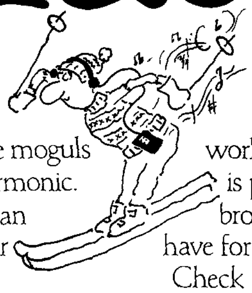
The inside of the bell is high enough to stand in comfortably, but the equipment jammed into it makes stretching a problem: umbilicals coiled like giant sleeping pythons, helmets, bailout packs, a cannister for heating, a cannister containing emergency gas. The walls are a maze of pipes and gauges and dials and levers. Facing the gauges is a small button seat for the bellman. I said that on the video screen the bellman had seemed to do nothing except read. "Quite right," Moran answered. "He's needed only if something goes wrong. Then he has to get out into the water and try to pull the diver back to the bell with the umbilical. He has a lightweight plastic helmet for that, not a big hard hat, so his head will get wet and he'll probably feel a bit cold, but he's out there for only a few minutes. The rest of the time, he just sits there and keeps an eye on the gauges. It's as boring as hell, so you need a good book. The truth is, you develop a feeling for trouble, and it becomes second nature after a while—everything sounds right, so everything's going right. But you have to do checks every ten minutes. You sit reading a book, then take a quick glance around. You know where all the needles should be on the dials. For instance, you can watch the diver's breathing on the helium-reclaim gauges: you set them for eight to ten bar, and the gauge flickers about two bar down every time he breathes in, then flicks back again. If something goes wrong, you know immediately. Also, we've got repeats on the surface; if we miss something, they won't. The divers out here have complete faith in the people looking after them, from the man in the bell all the way up the line to the guy running the dive at the top. That's what it's all about, really—like one big family. There's discipline in the job, but it's all on a friendly basis. We trust each other. If we didn't, we couldn't do what has to be done."

Family feeling, however, doesn't extend to the bell itself. "A particularly cumbersome affair," Shane Beary called it. "Five years out of date. Technology is evolving at a huge rate, but they don't keep up, because it costs too much and they're reluctant to spend money on things that don't show a direct profit. In the seven years I've been working out here, the diving systems have been changing all the time, but not once for the divers' comfort. On the contrary, the more they change, the more cluttered the inside of the bell becomes. What they're doing is filling a round bell with square equipment. You get three men coming up after a day's work, all of them tired and strained, and they have to go through this involved routine. There are all kinds of valves that have to be turned in sequence—that sort of thing. None of it is difficult in itself, but none of it is easy in the circumstances. Let's just say that it's unnecessarily complicated—particularly when you think of the clever things engineers can do."

The things they can do underwater extend now to most of the things they can do on the surface, from simple laboring jobs, like packing unsupported spans of pipeline with sacks of grout that will solidify into cement, to sophisticated technical tasks, like taking profile measurements of a platform leg or using a strobe camera to take stereophotographs or manipulating an elaborate machine that bevels the ends of the pipe. They also have a mobile submarine chamber—demurely called a habitat—for underwater welding. When it is not in use, the habitat sits on the upper deck of Stadive, a ponderous steel box, painted white, with a big protruding steel beam across its top. From the beam hang four gigantic lobster claws, two on each end. The inside of the habitat is a square steel chamber with blank walls broken only by five sealed magazines for equipment and two large portholes—one on the top, one near the floor on one side. There is a round hatch near the lower porthole, and four doors, two at either end, open onto the lobster claws. If an underwater pipe breaks, the habitat, its floor and doors retracted, is lowered over the fracture on guidelines, like an elevator in a shaft. Hydraulic jacks level the structure on the seabed, the floor closes up, the lobster claws grip the pipe and align it, the end doors close around it, and the water is sucked out of the habitat. A diving bell then locks onto the top porthole, and the divers who are to do the welding climb inside the now dry and watertight habitat. All their delicate welding gear is lowered to them separately, in an airtight module that locks onto the porthole near the floor. The module is known as MISS—Module d'Intervention Soudure Sous-marine—and it looks like one of the leggy, Heath Robinson contraptions that were landed on the moon: four orange tubular legs supporting a white steel oblong box with cannisters, like shoulders, on its sides, and a larger cannister, with bulges on it, hanging between the legs. It is a cumbersome piece of equipment that looks as if it had not so much been designed as evolved in use, dive after dive—a new wrinkle for each new need.

I spent about an hour in the habitat,

Ski Strauss



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up there on the sunny deck, although there was nothing much to see inside it, except the seven closed hatches of varying sizes that punctuated its metal walls. It was like a cell somewhere deep under Orwell's Ministry of Love. When I pulled the entry hatch to, the darkness was absolute, and I began to understand vaguely what the blackness and claustrophobia of the seabed must be like. It was like being buried alive. "Black as midnight and kind of directionless," David Hamm had said. He had also said, with, in the circumstances, a curious formality, "It is very hard to comprehend the size of those things down there."

What makes people dive? I asked the question several times, but none of the replies were particularly satisfactory.

John Roberts had shrugged and answered in one word: "Greed."

"The money comes in handy," said Billy Moran. "But I enjoy the work anyway. Even if the pay wasn't so good, I'd still do it. I couldn't stand all day in a factory or sit on my backside in an office. O.K., the first time I did a deep dive I found it a bit nerve-racking. I suppose I was a little awestruck, thinking, This is me down here. I hadn't really believed I'd ever do it, and there I was. Now I just accept it. It's my job, and that's all there is to it."

"Most divers have had the same life style since they were sixteen," said Shane Beary. "With that background, there's bugger all else we can do. It's an exclusive club, and once you join it there aren't too many alternatives for you."

The clearest answer came from Ric Wharton, who has dived for fun but never for a living, and now runs an Aberdeen-based company called 2W Diving. Wharton is in his forties, thin-faced, bearded, restless, and slightly sporty in his appearance. A delicately checked suit and a striped silk shirt, open at the neck, made him look more like a gambler than like a millionaire businessman. But that was appropriate, since, in 1981, he had masterminded the biggest and most improbable diving coup of the century: the salvage of four hundred and thirty-one bars of gold—each worth a hundred thousand pounds—from the torpedoed wreck of H.M.S. Edinburgh, eight hundred feet under the Barents Sea, far above the Arctic Circle.

Wharton began to dive in the Scuba Club of the Imperial College of Science and Technology, in London, where he trained to be an engineer. "In those days, you made your own wetsuit, learned to dive in flooded gravel pits, and froze to death," he said. "An altogether miserable way of spending your time, but risky and interesting." By the time he graduated, diving was an addiction, civil engineering merely a job. So he took work where he could be near the sea. First, he designed and built a lifeboat station on the north coast of Cornwall. Then, in 1970, he joined an American company as a diving engineer: "I spent three and a half months offshore in the Persian Gulf, then got ten days' home leave, all for six hundred dollars a month. In those days, you got *used*. One morning, I woke up and thought, This is no good—I've got a young wife back home and I'm selling my life. So after a year I joined Comex—by some accident of childhood history, I happen to speak fluent French—and became managing director of its British office, in Great Yarmouth. We built that up from a hundred and fifty thousand pounds' annual turnover in 1971 to a twenty-five-million-pound turnover by 1976. But I'm an ambitious man and, like any entrepreneur, I got fed up with making money for other people. So in 1977 Malcolm Williams and I founded 2W Diving. When we started, it was just the two of us, with one secretary. Now we've got one of the four biggest commercial diving companies in the world, with about a hundred and fifty people in our Aberdeen H.Q. and about a thousand on our offshore payroll."

Wharton is now an international businessman, who spends more time in airplanes than in a castle near Aberdeen he has renovated for his family. But the passion that brought him into the business in the first place has not diminished. "It is exciting, always exciting," he said. "Because you are dealing with real things and taking large risks. You're also dealing with the sea, which is continually fascinating and mostly very frightening. A great untamed area, lovely one day, deadly the next. And, because it acts in ways that not even the experts can predict, we are always breaking new ground, doing things that no one has tried before. We are repairing structures and, as we go along, developing techniques for complex operations that would be difficult on the surface, let alone five hundred feet down. Diving is fascinating in the same way. It's an adventurous profession that takes you to places where other people don't often go. There's also the pleasure of the company, of the companionship. Divers are a wonderful crowd of people. They used to be a very wild and ragged bunch, and to some extent they still are. But they are also exceptionally highly trained and professional They have to be technicians, with a detailed understanding of the specialized underwater equipment, and they have to be skilled mechanics to use it They also have to be as strong as oxen to do the laboring jobs. Above all, they must be self-sufficient, because, however technical and sophisticated the work, it's dark and filthy down there and they are on their own at the end of a hose. When a job has to be done on the surface, there is always a certain amount of teamwork involved if something goes wrong, you can ge help from other people. The seabed is different. A diving vessel with its crew and its fuel and its diving team is going to cost from twenty to twenty-five thousand pounds a day—over a thousand pounds an hour—just to keep it there to do a job of work You've got all that fantastic technology, but hanging below the ship is a diving bell, and hanging out of the diving bell at the end of an umbilical is a diver. And at the end of the day everything depends on his know-how and his hand-eye coördination. Either he performs or he doesn't, and his lack of performance is exceedingly expensive. So if he's no good he doesn' survive. The same applies to the team running the dive. For every guy in the water, there are a lot of other guys up top in support, and the diver's life is totally dependent upon them. If they make one wrong move, they could kil him—him and maybe a dozen other men in saturation. The possibility of a catastrophic accident is always present It is a testimony to the team's professionalism that, despite the intricate

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technical chain, accidents hardly ever occur. The general public thinks of divers as being wild, hairy, heavy-drinking guys. And it's true that a fair bit of their income *is* consumed by wine, women, and song. Why else have an income? But when they are working they are deadly serious, utterly professional."

Part of that professionalism, however, is in maintaining a casual tone and ignoring the utter improbability of the situation. One afternoon, in the diving-control room, I watched a diver inspecting a damaged section of pipeline between Brent Delta and Brent Charlie. The scene was brilliantly lit, as though in a studio setup, while Snoopy's camera panned slowly along a jagged gap that had been ripped out of the pipe's cement covering by a dragging anchor. The diver measured the scar with a steel ruler, calling out the measurements as he went, for the benefit of the technicians on the surface: "Two point nine centimetres. Three point zero centimetres. Three point two centimetres." He took out a piece of chalk, drew a heavy line around the damaged section, and asked for a basket of tools to be lowered to him. Then he and the supervisor launched into a detailed technical discussion of the nature of the damage while Snoopy's camera went on panning slowly up and down the scar. Despite the distortion, the diver sounded so businesslike and so close that he might have been speaking from the room next door. Then he called sharply, "Hey, Rocky."

The camera panned quickly up to his helmet, and Rocky, the supervisor, made a sudden, anxious sign to his assistant. "You rang, sir?" said the supervisor, in a plump, Jeeves accent.

"I don't 'arf fancy a snack," said the voice from the helmet.

The supervisor exhaled deeply. "We've tried that before," he said. "But the sandwiches seem to disintegrate and the salt's a bit of a problem. But hang about, they're working on it back at the beach."

Snoopy began to pan regularly from the diver to the murk above him, up and back, up and back, like a dog anxiously looking for its master.

A thin, fidgety young diver, carrying a black leather instrument case, appeared at the door of the control room. The supervisor glanced at him briefly and said, "What are you up to?"

"I'm trying my hand at the clarinet," the thin diver said.

The supervisor turned back to the control panel.

"I used to play the flute," the thin diver said to me. "I took it into saturation with me, and the first time I played it the controller came in on the phone and said, 'All these years, I've never heard anyone whistle like that.' "

The camera went on panning up into the dark water, then back to the diver. Finally, a hefty steel-mesh cage, painted white, dropped slowly toward the pipe and settled on the seabed nearby, sending up a little cloud of sand. The diver moved over to it in slow motion, unlatched its door, and began to carry the gear across to the pipe: sonic measuring instruments; a stereo camera that looked like a sawed-off double-barrelled anti-tank gun. As the diver moved methodically between the cage and the pipe, the supervisor said, "Typical businessman going to work." The diver guffawed into his mask. He took out his piece of chalk again and made more marks on the pipe. In his gloved hand, the stick of chalk looked too small to use.

As I watched him, it occurred to me that I was taking the chalk for granted: What else would he use to make a mark on a damaged piece of pipe? Then I remembered that he was four hundred and seventy feet below the surface of the water. What I was witnessing was a mystery. A mystery with a technical explanation, of course, but no less a mystery for that.

In a way, the diving-control room is a model for the whole offshore enterprise. The first time you see the banks of gauges, with their flickering needles, the digital readouts, the levers, the switches, the colored lights, and, above all, the images on the video screens—one of them apparently full of seaweed and sunlight, with a pair of hands holding a book at its center, like some obscure religious icon, and another with a helmeted spaceman moving in slow motion through shadows where fish come and go indifferently—it seems like the greatest show on earth, a technological miracle, a justification of every boast about man's ingenuity and his ability to organize. But within an hour you treat it the way the people concerned treat it —as just another job, more complicated than most, more difficult than many. The great depth of cold, dark

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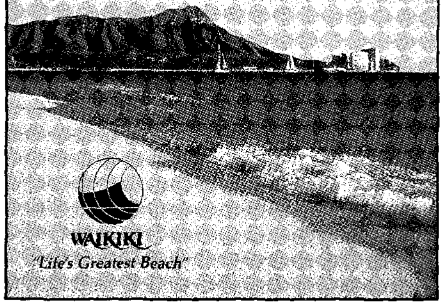

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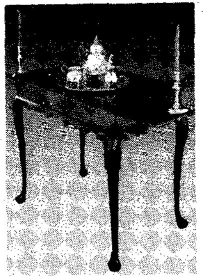

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water is just another obstacle to be overcome in the name of efficiency. Nobody mentioned the fear of the swim that David Hamm had said every diver felt, nobody mentioned the directionless darkness or the cold or the exhaustion or the overwhelming size of the structures down there under the water, which made the divers feel as inconsequential as houseflies.

"Diving is demanding," Shane Beary said. "But it's nothing like as risky as, say, climbing. In the mountains, you don't have the backup we have, or a certified training scheme. You could find yourself on a rope with any old fool if you weren't careful. In diving, nothing is left to chance. The highest accident rate is not in the water, it's in the home. Partly that's caused by the strain of the job, partly by being away for a month at a time, and partly by the sums we earn. Guys come out here from the services and suddenly find themselves deluged with money. They buy themselves expensive new toys—cameras, hi-fi, jewelry, a shiny new car. Finally, they get themselves a new wife. That's the real danger, not the diving. Diving is no more dangerous or romantic than working with high-voltage electricity. Provided you stick to the rules, follow the set procedures, do what you're told, you won't get hurt. The trouble starts when you get back to the beach. When you've been living in this alien environment for four weeks on end, the world back home seems equally alien. One of the few releases from all that tension is a good old-fashioned forty-eight-hour bender. But try explaining that to the missus."

IN July, above the sixty-first parallel, there is no night to speak of. At nine-thirty in the evening, the pale sun still rode clear of the western horizon. Two hours later, the great circle of water and sky was seal gray, not black. But, no matter what the hour was, the video screens in the diving-control room were never blank, the gauges went on flickering, and the air was filled with the amplified rasp of the diver's breath, like a subtly irregular metronome measuring a different, submarine time: "Huuuaaa . . . huuuaaa."

Elsewhere in this man-made archipelago, spotlights glared onto the drilling floors, where roughnecks heaved at the stands of pipe; far beneath the seabed, drilling bits turned steadily; roaring engines separated gas from oil, chippings from drilling mud; technicians were measuring, checking, taking notes, mending, relaying messages. And three hundred miles away in Aberdeen computers recorded every function of every working part. It was as though the whole gigantic enterprise had a strenuous life of its own that kept going no matter what the hour, no matter what the weather.

With no night and the unceasing work—all that effort, all that attentiveness—it should have been hard to sleep. But the cabins on Stadive were spacious and comfortable, and the vessel swayed slightly, lullingly, as it shifted about above the divers or moved gradually forward up the pipeline, yard by yard by yard. With the cabin door closed, the sound of the thrusters was reduced to a ghostly hum. But above that, distant yet distinct, was a faint, stuttering, intermittent creak, like the sound of someone typing fast in another cabin, then the long pause as his inspiration faded. I slept like a child every night and woke full of energy, although always a little uneasy at being the only person on board without a timetable and without a specific job to do.

I spent my last morning as I had spent most of my time on Stadive—watching a diver on the video monitors. Once again, he was piling bags of grout under an exposed span of pipe—routine work, simple and exhausting. After lunch, I went up on deck for a last look around. The day was cloudless and hot—shirtsleeve weather, even this far north and in the middle of the sea. One of the diving bells had been brought up from the moonpool for repairs, and a crew of technicians was swarming over it, inside and out, like wasps around a pot of jam. Two men were making adjustments to the MISS, and another crew was at work inside the habitat. One of them was singing—a hollow, metallic sound, as though from the bottom of a well: "I belong to Glasgee, dear ol' Glasgee toon."

Flight 7, a Sikorsky S-61, lifted off at four-fifteen sharp. Just before it arrived, a cheerful, beefy man called Mac, with a fiery complexion and nursery-blue eyes, who had greeted me affably every time I saw him in the corridors and the mess, appeared on the helideck wearing headphones under his hard hat. "Wotcher doing here?" he roared. "Running out on us?" He let out a great bellow of laughter and bustled off. For a few moments, I wished I were staying. But only for a few moments.

Going home, I found that everything was the same as before, like a film run backward: the chopper lifting, pausing, curtsying, then swooping gracefully forward and up; the installations hazy in the milky-green sea, with ranks of pipes like portcullises between their legs, their banners of flame streaming serenely into the sunlight. At Sumburgh, waiting for my connection, I drank watery coffee, then wandered outside to watch the spray rising and falling against a blue headland. At Aberdeen, the airport was crammed with the same tough young men with tattooed forearms and oil-company stickers on their duffelbags, and with the same gray-suited international businessmen—British, American, Dutch, Norwegian, French. But back at Heathrow the sky was overcast, thundery, and hot. Indian cleaners moved listlessly through the crowd, pushing mops, while the sweating passengers complained about baggage that didn't come. Then the emptied faces in the tube, the bustle and dejection of the Big Smoke. It seemed a long way from the Shetlands, with their voes and lakes and silence, their empty roads and cool air, even farther from the unremitting work and technological genius of the Brent field, and farthest of all from that single man at the end of his hose under five hundred feet of water, piling sandbags and measuring the damaged pipeline in the darkness. —A. ALVAREZ

(*This is the second part of a two-part article.*)

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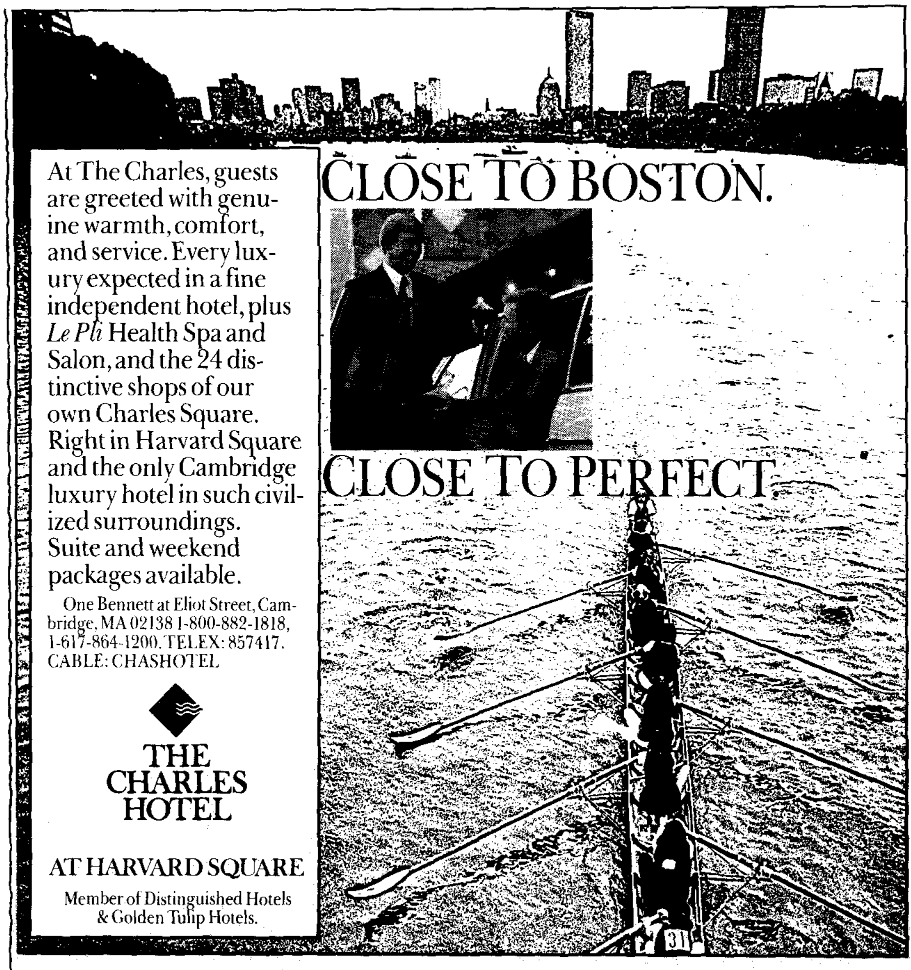
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THE CURRENT CINEMA

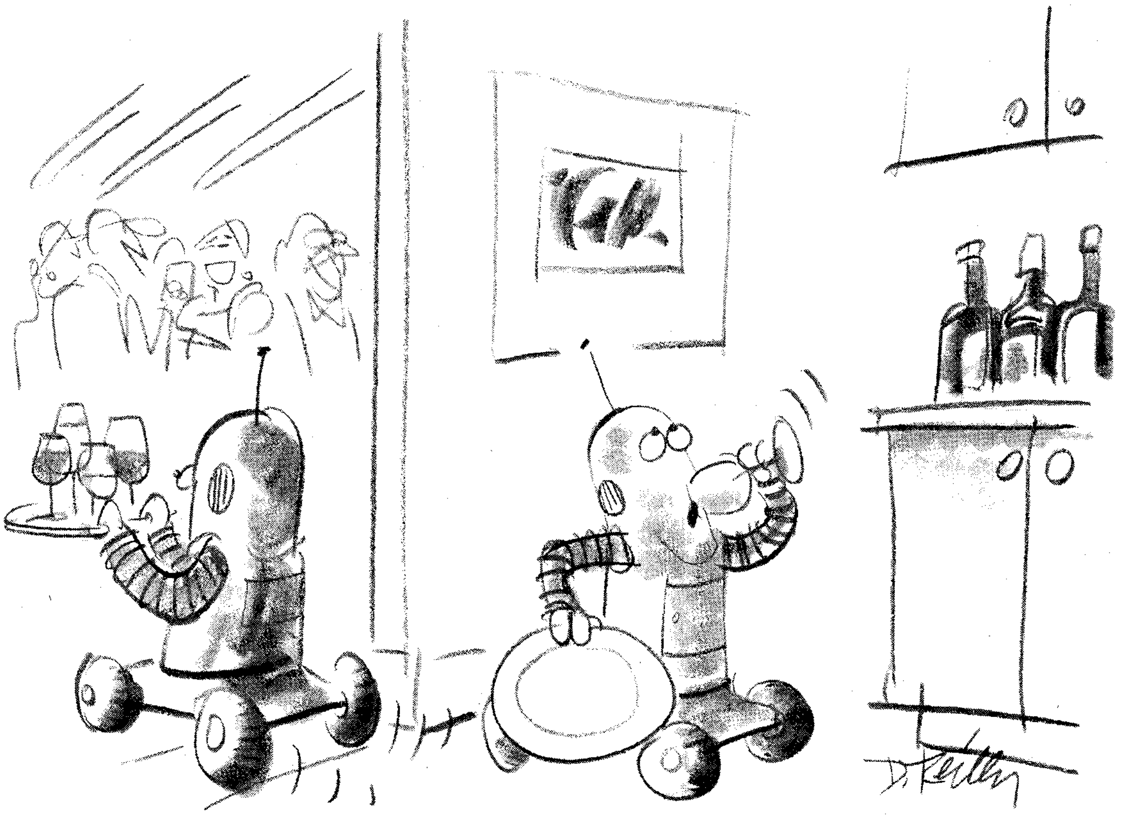
Lasso and Peashooter

NOBODY could have predicted that Robert Altman, who from 1970 to 1975 moved toward a looseness and openness of form and took talking pictures as far from theatre as any American director ever had, would be filming plays in the eighties. And I doubt if anybody could have predicted that the Altman who brought off the almost insuperably difficult transferral of play to film in 1982 with "Come Back to the 5 & Dime Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean" and again, in 1984, with "Secret Honor" would come a cropper with Sam Shepard's "Fool for Love." On the face of it, Altman and Shepard seem an ideal matchup. The herky-jerky instability of Shepard's plays wouldn't faze Altman—it would delight him. You'd think that if anybody could film "Fool for Love" and keep it metaphorical and rowdy and sexually charged it would be the *intuitive* Altman. His collaboration with Shepard represents one of the rare opportunities that moviemakers and playwrights have had to work together freely, and its failure can't be blamed on any commercial calculations, or on anyone's not doing his damnedest. You can see an immense amount of effort in the film—perhaps too much. The material seems to congeal on the screen, and congealed rambunctiousness is not a pretty sight.

In the theatre, "Fool for Love" works somewhat like a Pinter play. From start to finish, everything is unresolved but suggestive. Actors delivering fragments of dialogue hold the stage space by creating tensions out of inexplicable transformations and quick changes of mood—aggressions, murder threats, temper tantrums, sudden laughter, pangs of guilt and fear. But Shepard, always manic, loves flamboyant, dreamlike stage images, and he whips up more of a free-for-all ruckus than Pinter does. The high that audiences can get from his plays comes out of his fermented mixture of junk culture, hard-nosed poetic language, and counterculture macho (circa "Easy Rider") gone mythic. To keep a play cooking, he'll throw anything into the stew—animal, vegetable, or mineral. In "Fool for Love," it's an automobile graveyard, horses, spurs and lassos, a mad countess in a Mercedes, gunshots, and fire—a whole conflagration.

During production, Altman said, "The content is done. I'm not going to alter the content. . . . I've concerned myself more with the arena, the environment that the play takes place in—in other words, in the stage, the stage that I'm making." That has more or less been his approach to *all* his filmed plays (including David Rabe's "Streamers" and Marsha Norman's "The Laundromat"). Altman didn't come from the theatre, and he wasn't rebelling against it in his seventies pictures; in the early eighties, when he was stymied as a moviemaker and began to direct plays, it was as if he'd just discovered the theatre, and he approaches a playwright's text with a respect that's at the opposite pole from his treatment of a screenwriter's work. If "Fool for Love" seems thickened on the screen—seems like an anchor-weighted hulk—it may be precisely because he regarded the content as "done" and unalterable. In his finest work, Altman feels his way along. Here he sets about providing a visual frame for Shepard's finished play—a carnal (and existential) screwball comedy, with absurdist suffering and a Dionysian fizz. (If there's any pain in Shepard's work it's like what a happy drunk might feel if he stubbed his toe: it's no big deal—just another sensation.)

The 1983 play is about the no-exit, tormented sex relationship between Eddie, a broken-down rodeo cowboy (Shepard), and his half sister, May (Kim Basinger), who lives in a cheap motel "on the edge of the Mojave Desert." Eddie and May have been lovers erratically for fifteen years; they get together, he walks out on her, then he wants her again—as he does now. She wants him, too, but she can't take being hurt any more, and she fights him off. These two had the same father (Harry Dean Stanton), who sits on the stage, looks on, and occasionally speaks, but, as the author puts it, "exists only in the minds of May and Eddie." There's too much fizz for the lovers' torment to be strong drink; it's Pepsi-generation existentialism—it's for young audiences taking a deep swig of the dark side of things. But Altman directs



this material almost reverently, as a series of near-static pictures. The wide screen—fine for the outdoor shots—is murderous indoors. The dialogue, set off by the compositions, has the sound of theatuh, and, of course, with that phantom father poking around the junk heap outside May's room and making mournful sounds on his harmonica, the movie has the devices of theatre.

Sitting there, you think this stuff isn't much but maybe it could get by as a slapstick dance-of-death entertainment if it were just faster and more kinetic, if there were less mood and atmosphere, and Eddie and May were ferociously passionate and excitable, and we felt the connection between them—felt that they were dangerously alike. But the twists and turns, and the ominous passage when May's gentleman caller, Martin (Randy Quaid), arrives to take her to the movies and Eddie taunts him, are all fixed in place. What happens is not unlike what happened in the film versions of Pinter's plays—Clive Donner's "The Caretaker," in 1964, Friedkin's "The Birthday Party," in 1968, and Peter Hall's "The Homecoming," in 1973. The stage tensions disappear when the camera rules the space. About the only play I can think of that has walled-in emotional violence like that of "Fool for Love" and was successfully transferred to film is Cocteau's 1949 "Les Parents Terribles," where he used the camera to emphasize the claustrophobic family-apartment setting, and to put us right in there. (The characters batted around like moths in a lampshade.)

Shepard calls his adaptation "an exploded play," but to a viewer it looks just like the usual "opening out the play"—he lets the two lovers out of their cage. (It's a fatal mistake.) And he includes a sticky lament for lost innocence: a lonely golden-haired little girl at the motel represents May as a child, and this ties in with a scene of May regressing—expressing her vulnerability by lying down in a sandbox. The film also brings on Eddie and May and the Old Man in flashbacks to earlier points in their lives, adds characters who are merely referred to in the play, and expands the setting to the whole motel complex and the highway. Some of the casting—such as that of the teen-age May (Sura Cox) and of May's mother (Martha Crawford)—is remarkably convincing, and Altman gives an affecting, ambiguous lyricism to the

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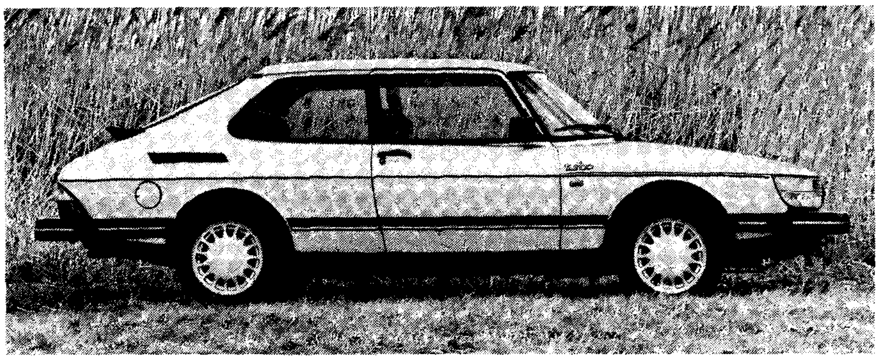

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bright, sunshiny flashbacks. But they dissipate the energy of the primal, raw love tangle.

Sam Shepard looked terrific in "Days of Heaven" and "The Right Stuff;" he had the rugged handsomeness and skinny haunches of an American archetype, and not much acting was required of him—or, at least, not much survived the final cuts. He's a feeble presence here, and since he plays Eddie as worn out and withdrawn (and maybe weak), he doesn't go in for any glamourizing makeup or lighting; he looks haggard, and puffy under the eyes. He may believe that the lines he wrote are strong enough to carry the character, and that all he need do is speak them. If so, he's wrong. His plays are written for an actors' theatre; when he delivers the dialogue, it has no visceral force, and most of Eddie's macho antics with his lasso just seem tiresomely symbolic. Altman gives us too many shots of Kim Basinger with tendrils of her burnished-gold hair tumbling down. She's likable, though, and she works hard—you can plainly see her stretching to be up to her role. With Pierre Mignot as the cinematographer, she's lighted so that her gray-blue eyes look lovely, and she has a flushed, smeary-faced, wounded quality. (I think she's meant to be so sultry she's shimmering with heat.) But she has no spirit. If she were fortyish, she wouldn't look out of place on "Dynasty." Randy Quaid's performance as Martin—a yokel variation of his Mitch in the 1984 TV production of "Streetcar"—is a relief, because Martin is just what he appears to be, and Quaid gives him a solid, hick doggedness. He makes Martin a definitive square, and Shepard does his best acting in his hipster-outlaw gamesmanship with Quaid. (Though Martin is harmless and nothing is at stake, Shepard is more alive doing this version of Bob Dylan's snide put-ons than he is as a raging, ambivalent lover.) As the half-seen Old Man, a presence rather than a character, and perhaps the dreamer of the dream we're watching, Harry Dean Stanton has the right tequila-swigging grunginess (except for his sparkling-white teeth), and he can pass for Shepard's father, but he seems as lost here as he does playing an angel in "One Magic Christmas." (I have no idea why the Old Man smiles in apparent pleasure at the desperate brawling of his children and grins happily when Eddie does dumb stunts with his rope.)

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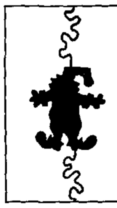

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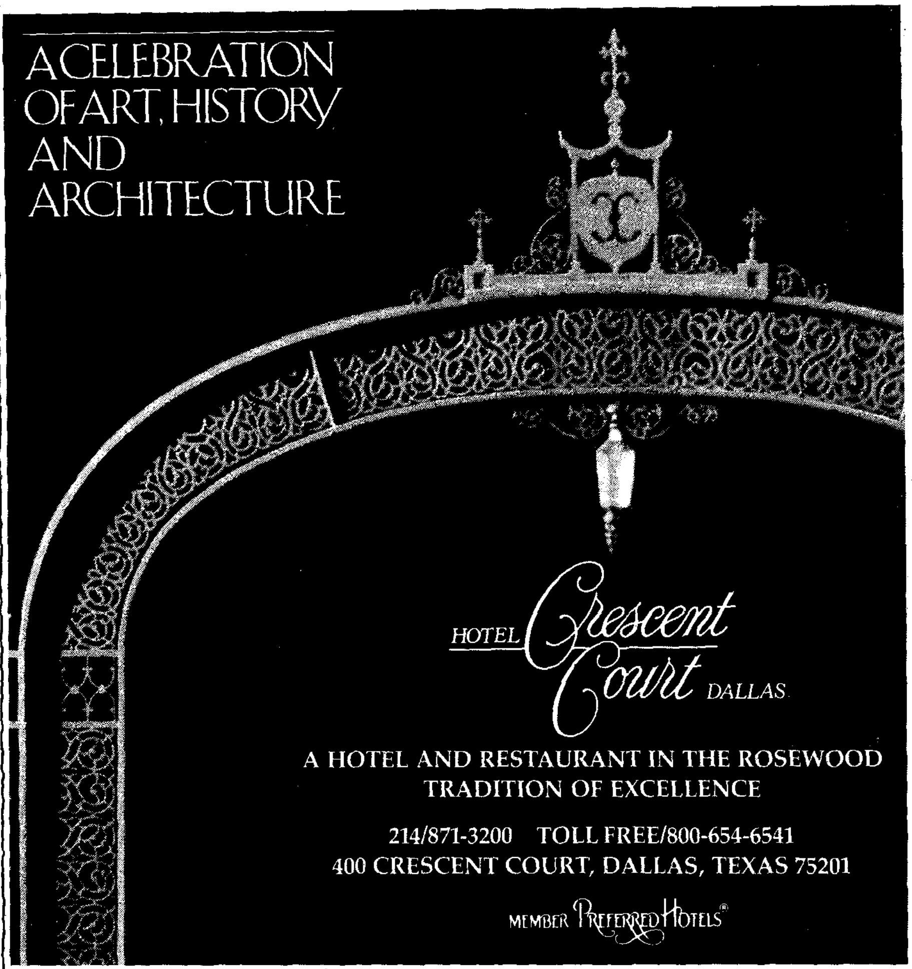
the movie is a numbing discomfort—the result of the conflict between Shepard's flinging-things-together method and the flossy high-art embalming he and Altman give the play. There's all this crazy stuff going on. Eddie and May flip out with no visible provocation—they're shouting at each other and suddenly he's tender, or she's clutching him and, presto, she knees him in the groin—and their tussling is pumped up with dead air and country-song interludes, as if this were an American classic about rootlessness (which I guess some people think it is).

Trying to be faithful to Shepard's stylization, Altman makes a big number of its being sunset in the first sequence, and then calls our attention to each change of the light. He may be assigning himself a modest role as the interpreter of Shepard's work, but his own artistry is ever present—we have nothing to react to but his brushstrokes. And the impresario director never leaves you alone with the characters; you feel him controlling everything, and it can drive you a little nuts. So can the Greek-tragedy aspect of the material: Eddie and May as the incestuous lovers who can't stay apart—who are fated to love each other and suffer for it. Altman and Shepard push fate over the top when the Old Man goes inside the burning wreckage of the motel and stands amidst the flames playing his harmonica.

THERE'S a coziness about the familiar murk and gloom of Victorian London, around 1870, in Barry Levinson's "Young Sherlock Holmes." Hansom cabs rattle over the cobblestones, stuffy rooms are crammed with bric-a-brac, and plump men in their winter woollens proudly display their bushy mustachios and muttonchop whiskers. The schoolboy Holmes—Nicholas Rowe, a gracefully gawky six-foot-four adolescent, stick-thin, with a slender, ascetic face—has a gentle, sweet precociousness. (He suggests a schoolboy Jonathan Miller.) Holmes' sidekick, the good-hearted Watson, is a country bumpkin who has just transferred to boarding school in the city and hero-worships the older boy. As this stocky, loyal chum—a junior version of an old duffer—little Alan Cox has to keep stumbling and sprawling, and he takes his falls like a pro. The movie has devised a way to bring out the malign potential in Victoriana. The fiendish killer that Holmes goes after is armed with



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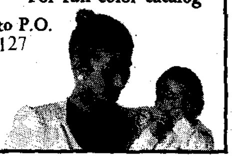

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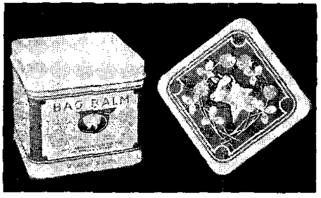

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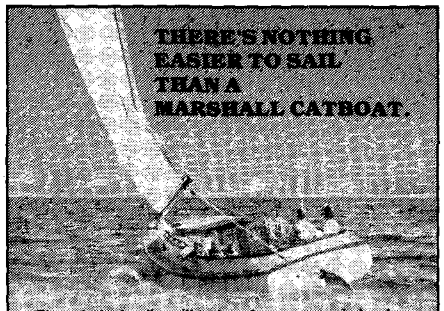

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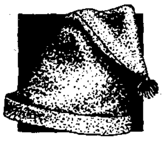

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"Young Sherlock Holmes" is handsomely lighted (by Stephen Goldblatt), and it has some diversions, such as Holmes' old teacher, the smiling, dotty Professor Waxflatter (Nigel Stock). Waxflatter's niece Elizabeth, played by the lovely Sophie Ward, could have used some of her uncle's eccentricity; she's too sugary a heroine. As Dudley, the rotter and school snob, Earl Rhodes makes his blondness seem slimy, and, as the fencing master, Anthony Higgins recalls Armand Assante's smoothies. Young Watson, who can't resist the dessert tray, has a hallucinatory moment of comic terror when a small army of squishy cream-and-custard pastries attacks him. And it's charming to see this normally slow-witted fellow come through in a crisis: torn between the plight of Holmes, who's trapped in a building and about to be consumed by flames, and the plight of Elizabeth, who's being kidnapped outside, Watson looks helpless, as if paralyzed and unable to help either one, then comes up with a single trick that saves them both. As long as the movie stays within the conceits of the Holmesian legends, it's mildly, blandly amusing. But when one of the imperilled old men gives an elaborate account of the background of the villainy (an archeological dig in Egypt, the burning of a village, the activities of a religious sect, and on and on) your mind drifts and you lose the plot threads. And when the picture forsakes fog and coziness and the keenness of Holmes' intellect—when it starts turning him into a dashing action-adventure hero—the jig is up. This boy actor (with his eyes that don't quite take the light, and his pensive manner) doesn't have the exuberance to give the fighting scenes a comic bounce; if he did, he'd be wrong to play Holmes.

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where members of the sect chant and offer up human sacrifices (beautiful girls are wrapped like mummies and covered in molten wax). Couldn't Levinson and the twenty-seven-year-old screenwriter, Chris Columbus, have waited a decent interval before ripping off Spielberg's "Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom"? You don't need much in the way of worldly experience to write an entertaining Sherlock Holmes pastiche, but you ought to at least have a little pride. These two don't even cover their tracks. What it comes down to is: they didn't have enough faith in the young-Sherlock Holmes idea.

It used to be that when a director's hits were copied he was far from happy about it; he understood that his pictures were being devalued—cheapened. But Steven Spielberg "presents" "Young Sherlock Holmes," just as he presented "Gremlins" and "The Goonies" (both also written by Columbus). Spielberg has said that he had "virtually nothing to do" with this movie except to offer some advice on the special effects, and there's no reason to doubt that. But didn't he even look at the script? Chris Columbus writes passable smooth dialogue, and he ties things together squarely and neatly, as if he were a machine designed to churn out material for what booksellers call "young adults." But there's a resounding hollowness at the center of this picture—Levinson's temple of doom, with its solemnly chanting choir. (The pomposity of this music is lethal; it's like a High Mass for a dead mouse.)

Would the picture be more popular if it were faithful to its premise and if Levinson knew what sort of tone he was after? I doubt it. But it would certainly be more satisfying to those of us who went to see it. And we'd think better of those who made it. (Levinson's comedy sense seems to desert him just when he's got legions of bald men with pigtails running around waving scimitars.) The picture still wouldn't be more than marginally entertaining, though. The movies of the sixties and seventies made so many leaps in perception and style that you feel a time warp when you watch the fare of the mid-eighties: pictures made by directors who were only looking for a good commercial project—pictures that don't seem to have any reason to exist. It would take a deliriously gifted director—a real hellcat—to wire up "Young Sherlock Holmes."

—PAULINE KAEL

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THE THEATRE

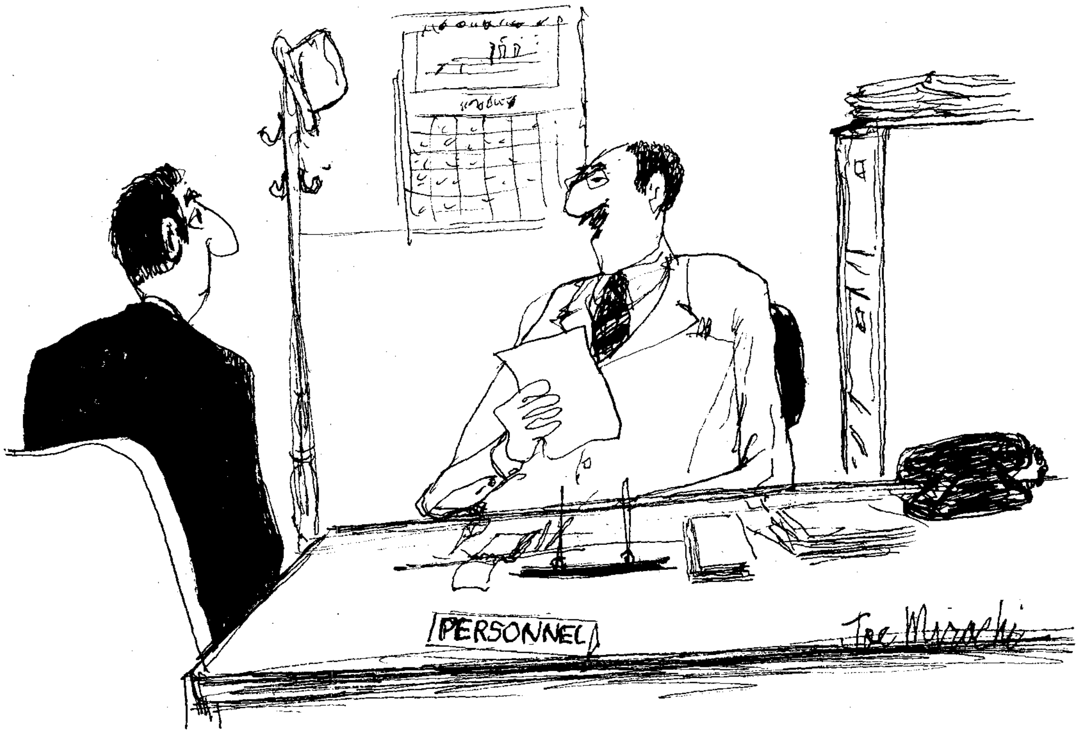
Nil Nisi Bonum

“Lillian” consists of a woman speaking directly to the audience for a couple of hours from the stage of the Barrymore Theatre. She is alone on the stage, which is set to indicate part of a bleak hospital room somewhere in New York City. The room is furnished with a single chair and a table; on the table are a carafe of coffee and an ashtray. According to the program, the date is January 10, 1961; in an offstage part of the room, we are invited to believe, the noted American writer Dashiell Hammett is dying. The woman is Lillian Hellman, who for some thirty years has been Hammett's lover, companion, and protector. As Hammett approaches death, Hellman recounts her life in a series of seemingly random raids upon the exceptionally ample resources of her memory, beginning with a childhood divided between New Orleans, her birthplace, and New York, where her father earned his living. The text of this recitation (for it is not, by even the most generous extension of literary courtesy, a play) has been prepared by William Luce, the author of a not dissimilar enterprise called “The Belle of Amherst.” Mr. Luce has drawn his material from the several volumes of reminiscences that Hellman put together over the last years of her life—reminiscences whose accuracy has not gone unchallenged. Before her death, in 1984, Hellman assisted Luce in the preparation of “Lillian,” so it isn't surprising that the portrait of her he offers us is a partial and highly favorable one. What makes the portrait well worth paying attention to is that Hellman is being played by Zoe Caldwell, who is one of the ablest actresses alive and could doubtless hold us spellbound with an impersonation of the Bobbsey Twins at Camp Rest-Awhile.

Caldwell *is* a good-looking woman and Hellman was not, but, thanks to skillful makeup and to Caldwell's formidable professional attack, the Hellman we see bears an uncanny—even a frightening—resemblance to the Hellman who was for so long a prominent figure in New York cultural life. She was a ruthless adversary, who often spoke in the language of the gutter, and in the course of telling certain egregious whoppers she forgot much that it was convenient for her to forget. (I recall how fiercely, almost half a century ago, she scolded a group of us for failing to raise funds with which to help poor, powerless Russia defend itself against the murderous onslaught of a vast army of Finns.) She was also a serious playwright, though Luce permits but few glimpses of her career; lacking the talent of an Odets or a Williams, she learned to compose interesting plays by dint of intelligence and sound workmanship. Other Hellmans will emerge in the future (though probably in the pages of books and not on a stage); meanwhile, we are fortunate to have Caldwell bewitching us with a performance that, for all its forcefulness, hints at the age-old admonition that at least for a little while one ought to speak nothing but good of the dead.

The setting of “Lillian” is by Ben Edwards, the costume (surely I have never before credited “costume” in the singular?) is by Jane Greenwood, the lighting is by Thomas Skelton, and the adroit direction is by Robert Whitehead.

Terrence McNally's “It's Only a Play,” at the City Center Theatre, successfully breaks one of the strictest rules laid down by the founder of this magazine, Harold Ross; to wit, that writers should never write about writers writing. From his choice of a title to the final curtain, Mr. McNally is concerned with nothing but the anguish of being a playwright and the hilarity that this anguish can be made to yield for the rest of us, who are lucky enough not to be playwrights. Ross suspected that writers were too lazy to invent characters who were not writers, but plainly it isn't laziness that has caused McNally to violate the Rossian dictum; his comedy is charged with an energy that leaps and zigzags from the merely frantic to the hysterical. Obedient to the playwright's intentions, I found that the closer the many characters came to total mental and physical collapse the funnier I found them.



“We already have a low man on the totem pole.”

To call the plot wafer-thin is probably to insult wafermakers from coast to coast. An excitable young man (Mark Blum) has written a play called “The Golden Egg,” and a wealthy woman (Christine Baranski) who happens to be wholly ignorant of the theatre has produced the play and is giving the obligatory opening-night party at her mansion on the upper East Side. The guests at the party include the playwright's presumed best friend, an aging actor working in TV on the

West Coast (James Coco); a fawning, hypocritical play reviewer (Paul Benedict); the director of the play, a kleptomaniac (David Garrison); and the leading actress in the play, fresh from starring in a series of failed movies (Joanna Gleason). Also on hand are an aspiring singer and pro-tem house servant (Jihmi Kennedy) and a world-weary woman taxi-driver named Emma Bovary (Florence Stanley). The tiny hinge upon which the plot turns is Frank Rich's review of the play in the *Times*—will it prove favorable or unfavorable? Such is the agreeable irony of the perpetual interplay between life and art that in the McNally play Mr. Rich dislikes "The Golden Egg" intensely, while in real life Mr. Rich likes "It's Only a Play" intensely. If Rich is the name most often dropped, we hear as well a hundred or so other names that resonate—or give off at least a slight hum—on Broadway, and to each of these names one or more jokes is effectively attached. Every one-liner I laugh at makes me a softer touch for the next; late in the evening, I laughed almost uncontrollably when a character inquired pensively, "How many 'p's are there in 'Papp'?"

The gorgeous set is by John Lee Beatty, the costumes are by Rita Ryack, the lighting is by Pat Collins, and the direction is by John Tillinger. A barking dog offstage, said to have bitten Arlene Francis just as the party was beginning, is, I suppose, only a recording, but he gives James Coco the opportunity to make many funny faces and therefore deserves mention.

—BRENDAN GILL

•

DEMOCRATS URGE END TO JERRY MANDERING
—*Angleton (Texas) Times.*

Who he?

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THAT'S TOO BAD DEPARTMENT
[*Headline in the Springfield (Mass.) Morning Union*]

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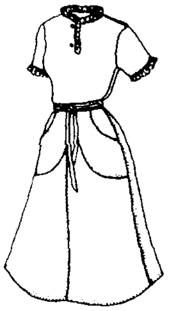

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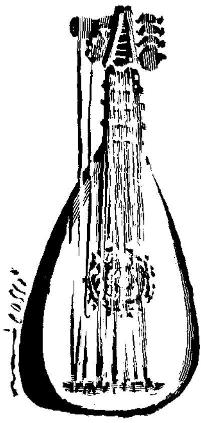
MUSICAL EVENTS

Medieval and Modern

THE Mannes Camerata, directed by Paul Echols, this month put on an ambitious, accomplished, and remarkable double bill of medieval music dramas: "The Play of Robin and Marion" and "The City of Ladies." "Robin and Marion" is the first comic opera, written by Adam de la Halle late in the thirteenth century for the diversion of the Angevin court in Naples. It's a famous piece, charming, funny, and tuneful, about a shepherdess who resists the advances of an amorous knight and remains faithful to her simple Robin. His stalwart cousins Gautier and Baudon and her friend Peronnelle complete the cast, and the evening ends with country games. The work was given a bright, clear performance, distinguished by many subtle touches, but never arty in ways to obscure the essential freshness and directness. Alexandra Homo and John Collis were Marion and Robin. William Hooven was the knight. Tom Zajac and Grant Herreid were the cousins, and Susan Bess Reit was Peronnelle; these three also played a variety of medieval instruments. The work was sung and spoken in Old French, inflected (the program said) with a Picard accent, and the actors had learned how to use—not just how to pronounce—the language.



"The City of Ladies" was a more elaborate affair. It was a dramatization by Mr. Echols of Christine de Pisan's "Livre de la Cité des Dames" (1405). Christine, born in Venice in 1365, married at fifteen to an official of Charles V of France's court, was widowed young, with three small children to support. She turned to letters—to such effect that in time both Henry IV of England and Gian Galeazzo Visconti of Milan invited her to grace their courts. She preferred to stay in France, and, after Agincourt, retired into a convent and into silence, breaking the silence only to write, in 1429, a hymn honoring Joan of Arc. Christine wrote books about women's roles in society. She attacked the celebrated "Romance of the Rose" as being insulting to women, and defended her attack in disputes with famous scholars. She wrote a treatise on military strategy which Henry VII had translated for the instruction of his army. And in "The City of Ladies" (Persea publishes a paperback translation) she set forth a vision of an ideal society founded on and regulated by feminine intellect, valor, fortitude, and good sense. The Mannes dramatization showed Reason, Rectitude, and Justice visiting Christine to rouse her from despondency to action. To assist her in the endeavor, they summoned in turn Sappho, the Cumaean, Erythraean, and Tiburtine sibyls, the martial queens Thamiris and Semiramis, the constant Hero, Penelope, and Thisbe, and, at last, the Queen of Heaven, who consented to rule the city. (Christine's book holds a much longer catalogue of heroines; Mr. Echols had to make a choice.) While the company of women grew, their city shaped itself before our eyes. The audience was banked down the two long sides of the concert hall at Mannes College. In the bare field between them, a mystic ground plan was suddenly revealed; cornerstones rose, then walls; and at the close a glittering, diaphanous roof swelled and spread to shelter the melodious choir of citizens.

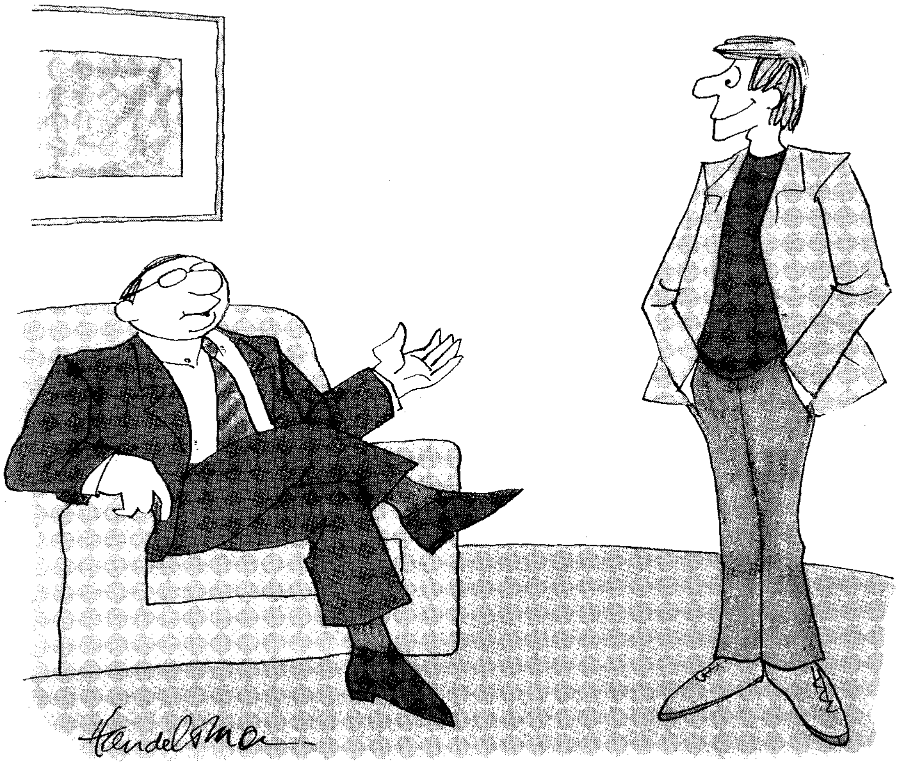
In previous Mannes Camerata productions (Jacopo Peri's "Euridice," Loreto Vittori's "Galatea," put on in Ralph Adams Cram's picturesque Christ Church), Mr. Echols displayed a flair for using available space imaginatively, to provide sounds and spectacle that, without compromise of musicological virtue, re-create for a modern audience the excitement that spectators of early music drama must have felt. This show in Mannes itself combined a sense of courtly entertainment with the ringside intimacy of a production like Grotowski's "Constant Prince." The music for "The City of Ladies" was compiled from compositions by Christine's contemporaries: all men, alas, but including Gilles Binchois (who set Christine's poems), Baude Cordier, Johannes Ciconia, and Guillaume Dufay. Some complicated compositions were chosen, and it was a measure of how far and how fast the Camerata has grown that they were sung—onstage, without book, without conductor—with pure intonation and lively rhythms. Singer after singer appeared with clear, unforced, steady tone and telling words: among them Evelyn Simon (Christine), Mimi Kate Munroe (Reason), Sheila Burke (Rectitude), Margaret Southwell (Justice), Katherine Galvin, Bettina Reinke, and Deborah Miller (the three sibyls), Ema Bustos-Vale (Hero), Alexandra Visconti-McAdoo (Penelope), and Johanna Maria Rose (Thisbe). The scenic designs were by Bob Phillips and Edmond Ramage. The costume designs, which recalled the illuminations in the British Library manuscript of the "Cité des Dames," were by Susan Douglas. The lighting was by Eric Cornwell. Dorothy Olsson Rubin devised the dances. The three instrumentalists of "Robin" played again, joined by four others, among whom Patricia Neely, on vielle, was outstanding.

THE principals and the choristers of the Metropolitan Opera's revival of Gounod's "Roméo et Juliette," staged by Fabrizio Melano after Paul-Émile Deiber's 1967 production, could with advantage have learned from the Mannes show how to wear medieval dress convincingly, how to paint their faces, comb their hair or wigs, arrange their features, and move their bodies so as to suggest Montagues and Capulets. The disparity between Rolf Gérard's simple, patrician designs and company demeanor that ranged from modern jock (Tybalt, Paris, Mercutio) to opera stock (Lord Capulet, Friar Lawrence, the Duke of Verona) was disconcerting. The show was saved—and lifted to an enjoyable level—by its Juliet and by the conductor. Catherine Malfitano, the Juliet, is a serious and dedicated artist. Her voice ran fluently through the intricacies of the famous role. Her trill was plausible. Her coloratura was accurate. The sound was clear and pure, and it filled the big house. She has youth, charm, and also the determination that a Juliet needs. She moved gracefully, winningly, eloquently both as an actress and as a singer, timing and inflecting Gounod's phrases in ways that made one listen. She reinstated Juliet's dramatic potion monologue at the close of the bedroom scene (corresponding to Shakespeare's "I have a faint cold fear thrills through my veins. . . . How if, when I am laid into the tomb, I wake before the time that Romeo come to redeem me? . . . O! if I wake, shall I not be distraught? . . . Romeo, I come! this do I drink to thee"), which had probably not been heard before at the Met. Its omission was practiced even during the first run of the opera, at the Théâtre-Lyrique in 1867. Adelina Patti seems to have sung it upon occasion in London (my evidence is a libretto now in the New York Public Library, annotated by a former owner with details of an 1875 Covent Garden performance); but the revised score published in 1888 to conform with the Opéra première of "Roméo" has the unequivocal footnote "À l'Opéra on passe cet Aria." Patti made her Opéra début in the 1888 production, stepping in at short notice when Hariclea Darclée, later the first Tosca, found the role beyond her. The Met program note was misleading on the point, and the *Times* critic described the aria as "cooked up" for Patti in 1888. It was part of Gounod's opera from the start; and Miss Malfitano made much of it.

Of "Roméo," as of most operas, there is no "definitive" version, and it is hard to get things straight. A glance at six scores in the Public Library revealed different music in each of them; my own score, representing the Opéra-Comique version of 1873, is different again. In brief, the long opera was revised during its initial run at the Théâtre-Lyrique (1867-68, ninety performances), revised and abridged for its Opéra-Comique production (1873-87, nearly three hundred performances), and amplified again when it was transferred to the Opéra (1888-1958, six hundred and twenty performances). And at each stage Gounod's publisher, Choudens, without changing the plate number (A.C. 1411), changed the plates and the pagination. (In 1959, the work returned to the Opéra-Comique, and the Opéra put on a new production in 1982, with Barbara Hendricks, later Faye Robinson, and Neil Shicoff as the lovers; but those post-Gounod stagings are without textual significance.) Gounod seems to have added the "Idomeneo"-like chorus "Ô jour de deuil" to the fourth-act finale in 1873; and in 1888, for Jean de Reszke's Romeo, he reworked the number again. At the Met, the big divertissement scene of Juliet's wedding to Paris (played at the Théâtre-Lyrique and at the Opéra but not, it seems, at the Opéra-Comique) is omitted (all but its final pages, Juliet's apparent death, which are tacked on to the preceding scene). At the start of Act V, the little exchange between Friars Lawrence and John, explaining how the former's letter to Romeo went astray, is omitted. (I've never heard it in the theatre.) A ballet is danced in the first act. Acts II and III are played without an intermission; so are Acts IV and V. It's a well-devised performance text, preserving the scale of a grand-opera "Roméo."

The conductor was Sylvain Cambreling, music director of the Brussels Opera, principal guest conductor of Boulez's Ensemble InterContemporain, and conductor last year of Berio's "La Vera Storia" at the Opéra. I admired him in these columns four years ago for a superlative account of Charpentier's "Louise" at the English National Opera. Distinguished conductors seldom come to the Met, so Mr. Cambreling—making his début here—was doubly welcome. Earnest musicians often have mixed feelings about Gounod; Martin Cooper's essay in the New Grove is brief and not unsevere. There was nothing patronizing in Mr. Cambreling's approach. He seemed to have fallen under what Bernard Shaw—reviewing an 1889 "Roméo" with de Reszke and Melba—called "the spell of the heavenly melody, of the exquisite orchestral web of sound colors, of the unfailing dignity and delicacy of accent and rhythm." He was quick to all Gounod's virtues, and re-created the spell for his listeners.

Romeo is an important role. Jussi Bjoerling used to sing it at the Met. A 1947 performance was recorded there, and has been published on the Met's own label. Conrad Osborne, reviewing the album in the December, 1984, *Opus*, hailed it as a demonstration that sometimes in this world perfection can be attained and that "it is possible for a person to act in a way that is at once perfectly harmonious, fully committed, and quite unfettered." He likened Bjoerling's tone to "an interstreaking of silver and gold, tinted by emerald and ruby. . . . Listening to it is the equivalent of peering deep into a crystal of perfect form and beauty that is turning in the light, so that it is a prism that flashes to us the spectrum in all its variety, yet always in harmony. And along with these sensory affects, it has emotive properties, the power to sadden or to thrill. It has this power in and of itself, independent of the meanings of words (though not of their sounds)." The tone "nevertheless



"Young people frequently feel elated, son. This is perfectly healthy as long as they keep in mind that there isn't any valid reason for it."

bears the word's encoding, which rides within it like a written scroll embedded in richest amber, and sends its messages therefrom with an aesthetic lift and finish it could not otherwise know." It would be idiotic to chide the Met's new Romeo, Neil Shicoff, for being no Bjoerling, but it would be wrong not to chide him for not trying harder, for not seeking at once to refine and to enlarge his art, for being apparently content—as Placido Domingo and Luciano Pavarotti are apparently content—to make unfailingly decent tenor sound and do little more. Mr. Shicoff displayed a well-trained and well-formed tenor, but he was no Romeo. His "acting" was a handful of arm-waving mannerisms; the least Romeo-like gesture was pressing his fingertips together and then raising them to his nose—like a schoolmaster pondering his acid comment on a schoolboy's misconstruction. Operatic acting is a mystery of its own. In 1889, the *Star* sent its drama critic, "Spectator," to Covent Garden's "Traviata," Emma Albani the heroine. And Shaw, the music critic of the *Star*, later reported, "He spoke of the whole performance with unqualified contempt, and positively refused to take our eminent lyric *tragédienne* seriously as an actress. What is more—and I recommend this point to all who are interested in opera—Spectator was right. . . . There is no denying that the sort of thing that Madame Albani and her colleagues do at the Opera is beneath the notice of any intelligent student of dramatic art." When I heard Bjoerling sing Rodolfo at Covent Garden, in 1960, his demeanor was that of a dignified Swedish Ambassador. He did not deign to scrabble on the floor in the search for Mimi's key; the Mimì—Rosanna Carteri, down on her knees—had to raise a hand to the tabletop so that Rodolfo could grasp it and exclaim at its coldness. But by tones and by phrasing Bjoerling gave a vivid impersonation of the ardent young poet. Mr. Shicoff's tones and phrasing seemed to come straight from a vocal studio. He was unspontaneous, unconvincing, monotonous—voicing Romeo's music with fine technical control but without "the power to sadden or to thrill." Against Miss Malfitano's Juliet, alive at every instant, this Romeo was a tenor going through movements. One wouldn't bother to complain did Mr. Shicoff not seem to be potentially a valuable artist, capable of better things, and endowed with a voice that could be used for the creation of characters. Perhaps all he needs is acting lessons—of the kind that fire an artist's imagination to vivid, communicative, apparently spontaneous utterance. I'd like to hear him in a production that had been rehearsed by Peter Hall, Peter Brook, Frank Corsaro.

THE Boston Early Music Festival Orchestra—star of the 1985 Festival, and America's answer to the contemporary eighteenth-century orchestras long established in Europe—came to New York this month to give a concert in Alice Tully Hall. Gustav Leonhardt conducted a program of Zelenka, Muffat, Bach, and Rameau. He conducted in the twentieth-century manner, standing in front of the band. The sounds were not as bold, joyous, and free as those Nicholas McGegan, seated at a harpsichord, drew from the orchestra in the Boston production of Handel's "Teseo" last year, but they were elegant, well shaped, and pleasing. There was pretty interplay, in Zelenka's Sinfonia a 8 Concertanti, between violin and oboe, and violin, oboe, and bassoon, but also a smudge or two, unexpected from such virtuoso instrumentalists as Daniel Stepner, Stephen Hammer, and Dennis Godburn. Mr. Leonhardt holds his executants on a tight rein. His ideas are firmly shaped, individual, often piquant. The Rameau was a long suite of bewitching instrumental numbers drawn from the heroic pastoral "Zaïs," starting with that extraordinary overture representative of Chaos broken into clashing elements and then arranged into order.

The orchestra is a band of choice players, mainly from Boston, New York, and California, and for the New York concert it was reassembled without change of personnel. After "Teseo," I declared it the finest Baroque band I'd ever heard. (Winton Dean said the same, in the *Musical Times*.) This concert, the second in a Lincoln Center Great Performers series on original instruments, didn't quite confirm that first impression; but then Tully Hall—a bleak place, acoustically and visually—may have taken a toll. Friends seated toward the back told me that fine detail was not reaching them.

THOMAS GALLANT gave a short, lively recital entitled "The New Oboe" in Carnegie Recital Hall this month. The new oboe is not the plan-

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gent, pastoral instrument heard piping its slow ditty in the country scene of Berlioz's Fantastic Symphony. It chirps and chatters, bubbles and bounces. It's the instrument Elliott Carter wrote for in the "Sandpiper" song of his Elizabeth Bishop cycle. Mr. Gallant's program began with Heinz Holliger's Study II (1982), which opens on one of the oboe's highest notes, drops to the lowest, and runs the range of new, "unnatural" sounds, undreamed of by those who designed the instrument, which modern players have learned to coax from it. In Harvey Sollberger's "Two Oboes Troping" (1963), Mr. Gallant was joined by Claudia Coonce, and the pair suggested two birds pecking and chortling merrily over a basket of delicious nuts. Gilbert Amy's "Jeux" (1970), for one to four oboes, was done in a three-oboe version—Marilyn Coyne joined the ensemble—and the trio became the "Macbeth" witches in unmalicious vein, cackling and gossiping volubly over each subject that came up. There was both brilliance and lyricism in Luciano Berio's "Sequenza VII" (1969), for solo oboe against a pedal B (supplied from the wings by Miss Coonce and Miss Coyne). Berio uses "multiphonics"—those faint chordal squawks whose pitches seldom sound convinced—in a musing, poetical manner. Eleven strings from the Group for Contemporary Music, conducted by Anthony Korf, then joined Mr. Gallant for Berio's "Chemins IV on Sequenza VII" (1975)—the earlier solo cradled in an intricate web of string counterpoints. The performance was billed as a New York première. So was that of Krzysztof Penderecki's "Capriccio" (1965), also for oboe and eleven strings—a work of sixties avant-garde which has stayed fresh. Mr. Gallant is a player who unites technical mastery with intentness, charm, and wit. This was an unusual and attractive recital.

—ANDREW PORTER

•

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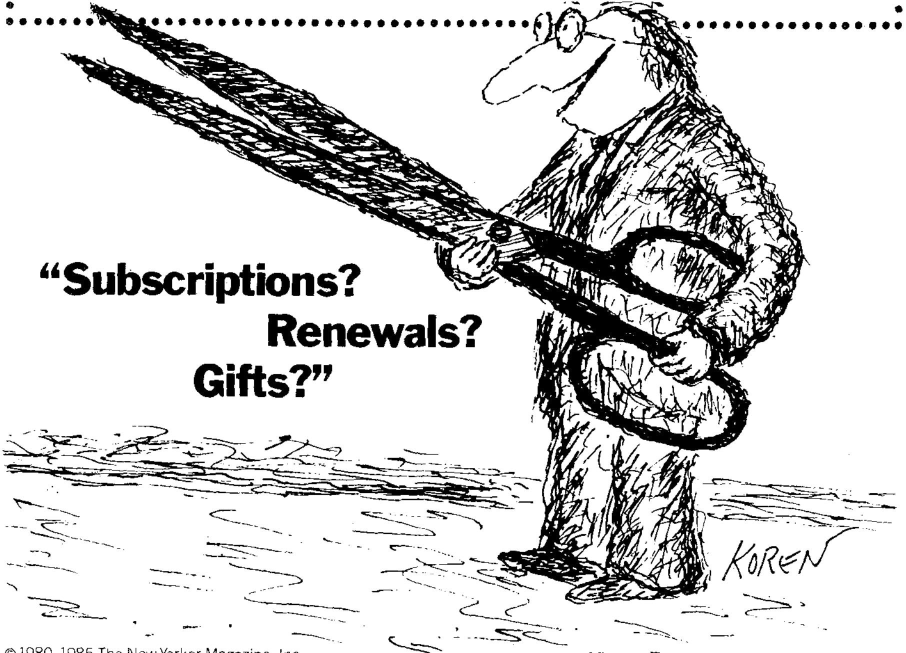
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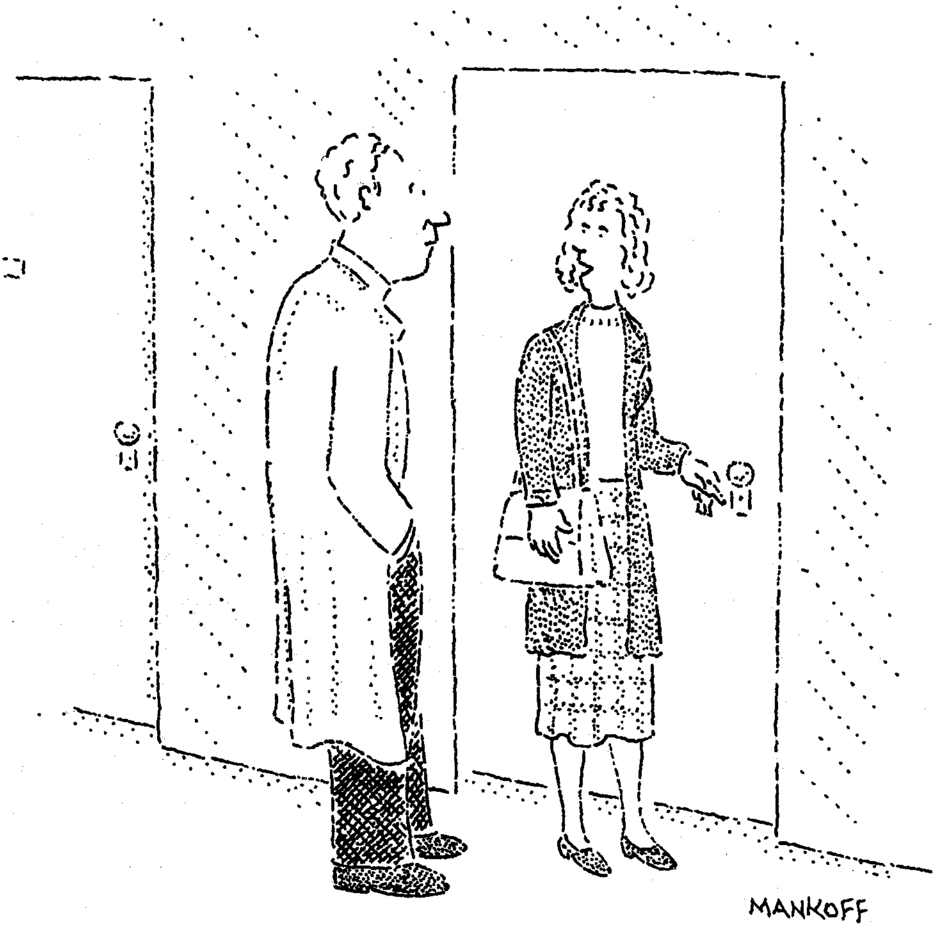
BOOKS

Moral Muscle

IN "O Canada," his 1965 survey of Canadian writing, Edmund Wilson, a master of literary flanking, circumvented the novelist Robertson Davies by saying, "There are writers I have not read—such as Robertson Davies and Ethel Wilson, Ringuet and Yves Thériault—who I am told are of special interest, and I hope that I shall not be reproached for omitting these figures or others." (He gave considerable, admiring space to the novelists Morley Callaghan and Hugh MacLennan, neither of them Davies' superior.) At the time, Davies had written more than a dozen plays and novels, and he has continued to produce his sly, subtle, funny, graceful novels, the newest of which is "What's Bred in the Bone" (Viking; $17.95). It does not, in the current mode, smash and grab but invites you in, offers you fine prose ("His monocle gleamed with suppressed secrets"), sufficient realism, strong narrative pull, Forsterian irony, and plenty of moral muscle.

Davies sets the book in the form of a biography of an elusive, brilliant, clouded man named Francis Cornish. But, because Davies has little faith in biography and because he wishes to indulge in some medieval mischievousness, he tells his story through the Lesser Zadkiel (the Angel of Biography, and a member of the staff of the Recording Angel) and the Daimon Maimas (a kind of built-in Navigational Angel and "artistic conscience"). They are not much like the sweet-toothed angels that infested American movies in the thirties and forties. They appear sporadically, and talk like this:

> —You haven't any pity, Maimas.
>
> —Neither have you, Zadkiel, and don't pretend you have. Long, long ago—if we must talk as though time had any meaning for us—I learned that when a tutelary spirit like myself is given a life to watch over, pity merely makes a mess of things. Far better to put your man over the hurdles and scrape him through the hedges, and toughen him up. It is not my work to protect softies.



"Look, I say 'Star Wars' and you say 'Strategic Defense Initiative,' so let's call the whole thing off."

Francis is born in 1909 in the provincial town of Blairlogie, which is sixty miles northwest of Ottawa and is considered by city people a "Jumping-Off Place." Its five thousand souls are made up of Scots, who rule the town; French Canadians; and Poles, who provide its farmers, laborers, and servants. Francis's mother, Mary-Jacobine McRory, is the beautiful daughter of a lumber baron who emigrated to Canada from Scotland in the mid-nineteenth century. His father is an impoverished, opportunistic English officer, whom she meets when she is introduced at Court. Francis and Mary-Jim, as she is called, represent Old Money and New Money:

> The high priests of Old Money frequently wore top hats on weekdays, if they were going to do something priestly with money. They fought furiously against short coats for dinner dress, and white waistcoats with tailcoats. They kept mistresses, if at all, of such dowdiness they might almost have been mistaken for wives. For them the nineteenth century had not quite ended.
>
> New Money, on the other hand, had taken its cue from Edward VII, who had a high regard for wealth however it was come by, and liked people with some "go" in them. New Money aspired to be Big Money, and did not greatly care if the drawing-rooms of Old Money were not easily opened. New Money wore dinner suits, which it called tuxedos, and smoked big cigars from which it removed the band before lighting up—an unthinkable solecism, for what if you should get a tobacco stain on your white glove?

Francis lives a bleak, courageous childhood. His father becomes involved in the English Secret Service during the First World War, and spends much of his time in Ottawa and London, and his wife follows him. Francis, left in Blairlogie, is raised as a Catholic by his great-aunt, Mary-Ben, and by servants. He attends the local school and is bullied by the teachers and the children. Davies writes, "Whoever lives in the finest house in a small Canadian town dwells in a House of Atreus, about which a part of the community harbours the darkest mythical suspicions. Sycophancy is present, but in small store; it is jealousy, envy, detraction, and derision that proliferate." Francis's discovery that he can draw saves him. He

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studies a well-known caricaturist and draws everything. He befriends the local embalmer, Zadok Hoyle, and Zadok lets Francis sketch his corpses as he works on them. Francis is not aware of who Zadok is (his presence in Blairlogie is a flamboyant bit of Dickensian coincidence), but he does find out that what a terrible townie named Alexander Dagg says to him is true: "There's something funny about your house. People see lights where a light's got no right to be. My Maw says there's a looner in there somewheres. Somebody chained up. Does yer old aunt have to be chained up when her head gets too bad?" The looner is Francis's older half brother, an idiot, who was supposed to have died and been buried years before. He becomes a Dark Presence in Francis's private mythology. Then Francis is sent to a boarding school in Toronto, and the vivid, zinging first third of the book—perhaps dug out of Davies' own experiences in Thamesville, Ontario, where he was born, in 1913—is over.

Francis goes to a Canadian college and on to Oxford, where he follows his father into the Secret Service. He progresses steadily as a painter, and becomes apprenticed to a famous Italian restorer and art expert named Tancred Saraceni. In the late thirties, he finds himself—as both spy and apprentice—with Saraceni in a Bavarian castle owned by a German aristocrat. He counts the boxcars that go by late at night to a nearby concentration camp, and he helps Saraceni touch up second-rate old German paintings, which are shipped to England in wine casks, then traded to unsuspecting chauvinist German collectors for far more valuable Italian works. Francis's rectitudinous self, already disarranged by what he has to do with Saraceni, is then stretched to its limits. At Saraceni's behest, he does a small picture on an old panel somewhat in the manner of Holbein. He calls it "Drollig Hansel." Saraceni is astonished by its beauty and skill. Not long afterward, Francis is sent by Saraceni in his stead to The Hague to examine a newly discovered painting that is supposedly by Hubertus van Eyck. Francis, spotting an anachronism in an otherwise immaculate piece of work, exposes the painting, and its forger commits suicide. At this point, Davies, through his henchmen Zadkiel and Maimas, can send Francis to perdition or let him pay the penalty and be pardoned. Granting Francis a "double con-

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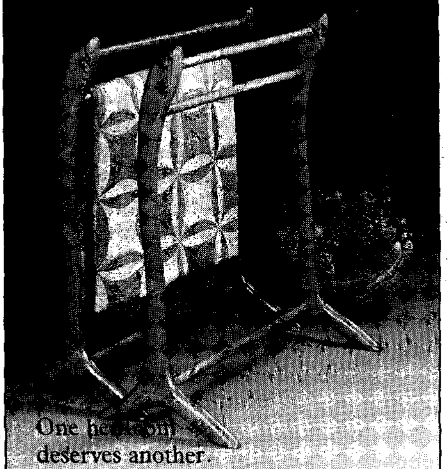

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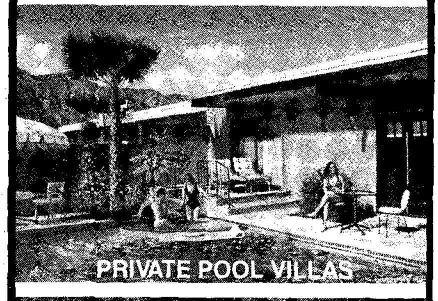

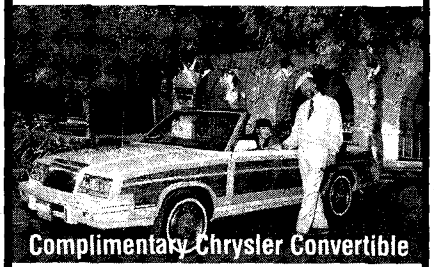

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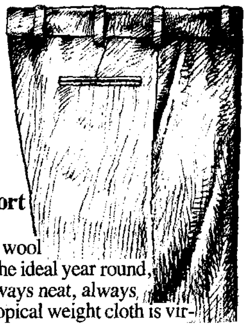

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science," he does neither. Saraceni completes Francis's apprenticeship by asking him to do another painting. He is to use a triptych that has been moldering in a castle hallway. He paints a religious allegory in the style of "Drollig Hansel" (it is the only style he ever works in successfully), calling it "The Marriage at Cana" and filling it with faces and figures from his own life. It is surpassingly brilliant, and Davies, relishing his own light-fingered pedantry, offers various interpretations of the painting—political, religious, and alchemical (the figures being wedded represent the male and female halves of Francis's soul). Many years later, the picture comes to rest in an American museum—the work of a mysterious painter known as the Alchemical Master.

Francis eventually returns to Canada and lives an eccentric and largely satisfying old age. Always independently wealthy, he has become a multimillionaire and a miser. He amasses a huge collection of pictures and keeps it in a big and untidy Toronto apartment. He visits with art cronies and with his ancient and still beautiful mother, who grows distracted and vague when he questions her about the looner. One of his last acts is to bequeath to the National Gallery in Ottawa his preliminary sketches for "The Marriage at Cana."

Davies has a sharp tongue, and he lets it loose at such matters as Canadian provincialism, modern science, hypocritical teachers, and the Catholic Church. He also abhors fictional empty spaces; the last half of "What's Bred in the Bone" is a warehouse of painting lore. Davies cherishes language, and he is apt to scatter in our path such words as "wittoly" and "sonsy" and "chthonic." But in the elegant surroundings they are more like strange flowers than stumbling stones. —Whitney Balliett

BRIEFLY NOTED

GENERAL

Part of My Soul Went with Him, by Winnie Mandela, edited by Anne Benjamin, with Mary Benson (Norton; $14.95 cloth, $5.95 paper). Pages 106 to 108 of this book list the arrests, trials, detentions, imprisonments, and bannings to which Mrs. Mandela was subjected between 1958 and 1985 in her struggles with the government of the Republic of South Africa. Her husband, Nelson Mandela, a leader of the interracial African National Congress, was sentenced to life imprisonment in 1964 (they were married in 1958 and have two daughters), and thereafter Mrs. Mandela, who was the first black medical social worker in South Africa, became unemployable for political reasons. In an introduction, Anne Benjamin explains that she visited Brandfort, a small town in the Orange Free State to whose ghetto Mrs. Mandela was exiled, and was able to tape-record extensive interviews with her; these, together with letters and statements or memoirs by friends and colleagues, and notes by the editors, make up the book. Mrs. Mandela's recollections, graphic and down-to-earth, suggest the superior competence and exemplary courage that have transformed the wife of a leader into a leader.

Napoleon 1812, by Nigel Nicolson (Harper & Row; $16.95). A short, vigorous narrative account of the events, most of them catastrophic, immediately before and immediately after the Grand Army's thirty-five-day sojourn in Moscow. Mr. Nicolson writes as an enthusiast, but his enthusiasm is for the perplexities of the campaign, and is firmly nonpartisan. He sees indecision on both sides, errors of judgment, and apathy. He sees in the Russian commander Kutuzov nothing of the hero depicted by Tolstoy, and he sees Napoleon at his least Napoleonic. He quotes the highly placed eyewitness Caulaincourt: "Never was a retreat worse planned, or carried out with less discipline." Even the bare statistics are appalling: Napoleon marched into Russia, in June of 1812, with some five hundred thousand men; he reached Smolensk in his retreat, in December, with a mere forty-one thousand. The dead died of heat, in battle, of starvation, of cold. "The cold killed many of them overnight," Mr. Nicolson writes. "Baron Larrey, chief surgeon to the army, noticed that the bald died first." If there is a hero, it is Marshal Ney, who in the retreat was himself the rear guard—the last member of the Grand Army to leave Russian soil at Vilna. Maps and illustrations.

The Diary of Beatrice Webb: Volume IV, 1924-1943, edited by Norman and Jeanne MacKenzie (Harvard; $25). This volume opens with what should have been glory and triumph—the installation of the first Labour Government, in which Beatrice's beloved husband, Sidney, took Cabinet office—and ends with the author's death. Sidney Webb also served in the second Labour Government, of 1929, and became a member of the House of Lords. However, Mrs. Webb (she refused to take her husband's title) regarded success darkly. Her personal puritanism, heretofore exercised about the sexual mores of the young, had a new target: the corruption of the Labour Party by the Court and by London society. (She managed to snub the King and Queen with the greatest self-satisfaction until her husband's position as Secretary of State for the Colonies obliged her to attend a dinner at Buckingham Palace for delegates to the Imperial Conference of 1930.) Happily for Beatrice, the collapse of the second Labour Government under the blows of the Depression allowed her husband to return to their joint study of social policy. In the nineteen-thirties, they wrote their long-lived, wrongheaded best-seller "Soviet Communism: A New Civilization?" As in earlier volumes of the diary, the Webbs met the current literary and political eminences (Virginia Woolf, Nehru) and Beatrice got them wrong. It is a relief to find her mellowing toward such old friends as Bernard Shaw and H. G. Wells. Mrs. Webb was a paradox to the end of her dogged days: she devoted herself to human betterment but accurately confided to her diary, "I do not *like* human beings."

JOHN TRAIN'S MOST REMARKABLE NAMES, compiled and annotated by John Train, with a foreword by George Plimpton, and with drawings by Pierre Le-Tan (Potter; $9.95). Mr. Train introduces us here to such real-life (he swears) folk as Constant Agony, Katz Meow, C. Sharp Minor, Defred Goo Folts, Gretel von Garlic, Dr. Safety First, Ecstacy Goon, and Odious Champagne. And some five hundred more. Mr. Train's field of humor is much like eating boiled beef with horseradish sauce, or chocolate fudge. The first few bites are delicious, then satiety appears. Marmalade P. Vestibule. Evan Keel. Eucalyptus Yoho. It might usefully be noted that the celebrated Texan Ima Hogg is genuine, but her equally celebrated sister Ura Hogg is a fiction, and (as a sort of footnote) that there is a resident of Farming-

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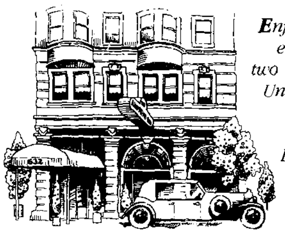

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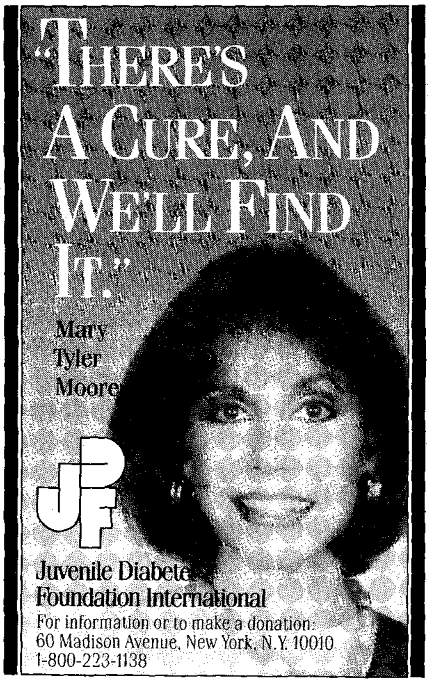
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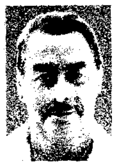

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ton, Missouri, named Ima June Bugg.

NOTE: "Dating Your Mom," a collection of humor pieces by Ian Frazier, has been published by Farrar, Straus & Giroux ($11.95). Most of the contents originally appeared in *The New Yorker*. . . . "Sea to Shining Sea: People, Travels, Places," a collection of Berton Roueché's reports on journeys in the United States and Europe, has been published by Dutton ($18.95). All the contents first appeared here.

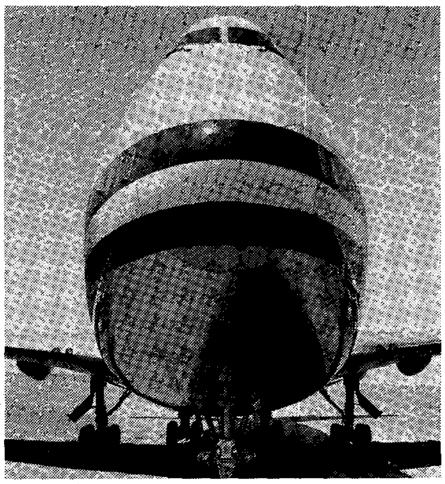
MYSTERY AND CRIME

LONDON MATCH, by Len Deighton (Knopf; $17.95). This novel, which takes place largely in London, completes the trilogy of "Berlin Game" (which takes place largely in Berlin) and "Mexico Set" (which takes place largely in Mexico)—whose titles, at least, have connotations of tennis. Indeed, it closes with the admonition "It's not game, set, and match to anyone. It never is." The problem is the usual one: Is there a K.G.B. agent hidden in the espionage bureau called London Central? And Bernard Samson, the incomparable English field man whose aristocratic wife, Fiona, has defected to Moscow, is suspected of being the mole. Then, there is the question of the authenticity of Erich Stinnes, the top K.G.B. operative whom Samson persuaded to defect. Then, there is the beautiful young Gloria, who is wildly in love with Samson. Then, there is the threat to Samson's children: Will Fiona try to steal them away to Russia? There is also, as before, Mr. Deighton's sardonic style: " 'Let me tell you something, Bernard,' said Dicky, leaning well back in the soft leather seat and adopting the manner of an Oxford don explaining the law of gravity to a delivery boy." And, of course, his ability, almost unique in the genre, to create tension and suspense with a minimum of action.

•

EDITOR'S NOTE: Today's feature on Illinois State University President Lloyd Watkins is the first of an infrequent series following the on-and-off-the-job lifestyles of top executives of some of the major employers in the Pantagraph area. The articles are written by Tom Gumbrell, a Pantagraph staffer for more than 30 decades.
—*Bloomington (Ill.) Pantagraph.*

And so life goes in *Pantagraph* country.



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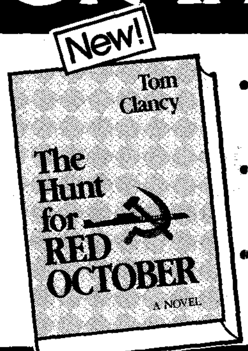
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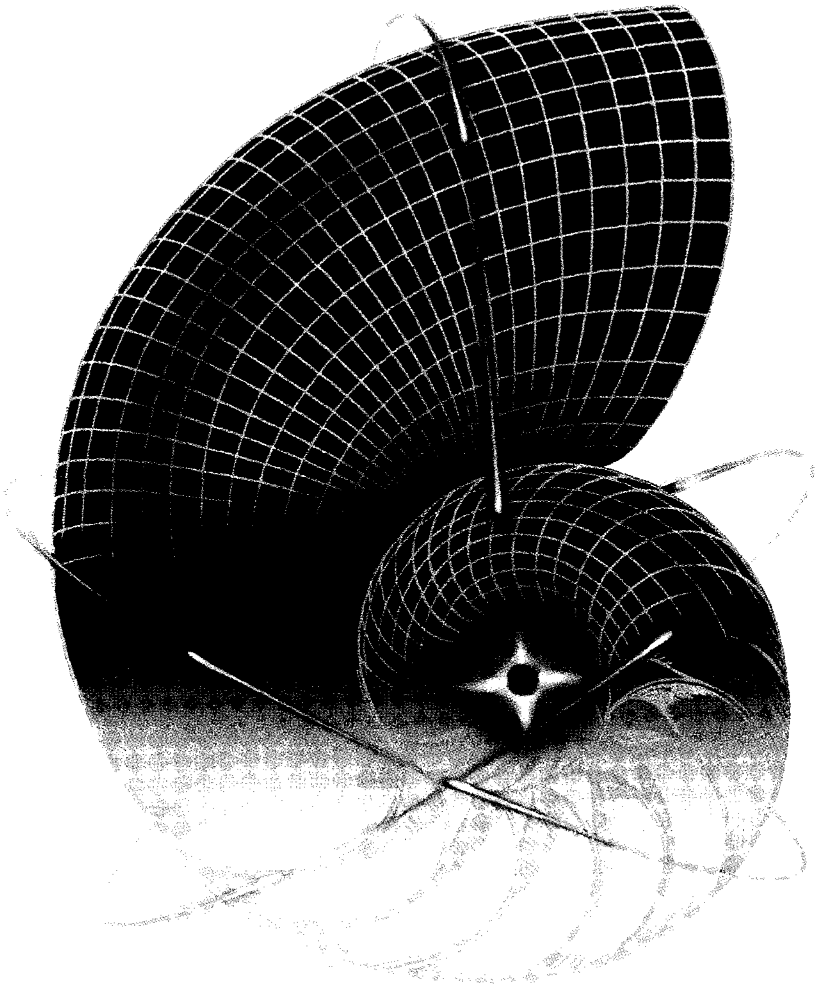

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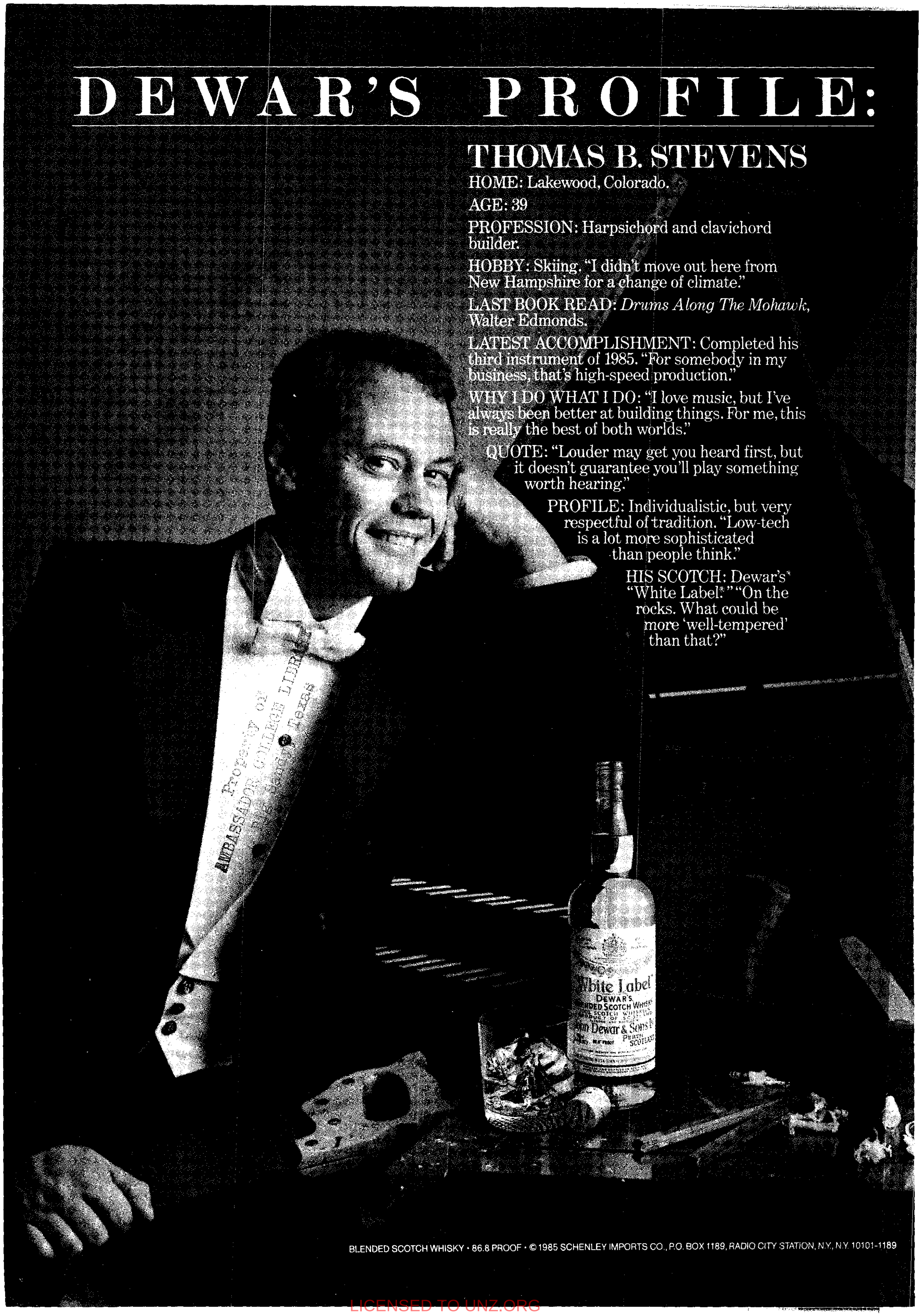

DEWAR'S PROFILE:

THOMAS B. STEVENS

HOME: Lakewood, Colorado.

AGE: 39

PROFESSION: Harpsichord and clavichord builder.

HOBBY: Skiing. "I didn't move out here from New Hampshire for a change of climate."

LAST BOOK READ: *Drums Along The Mohawk*, Walter Edmonds.

LATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT: Completed his third instrument of 1985. "For somebody in my business, that's high-speed production."

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